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LINES FOR AN ALBUM.

BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

Fair girl, 'tis fit that thou should'st dedicate
This book to love and friendship. Send it forth
To those whose souls as its own leaves are pure,
And they will trace their choicest thoughts for thee
As tributes of affection. Let it bear
On every page some feeling of the heart,
Some sweet memorial of a spirit high
And gentle as thy own, and it will be
To thee a holy record, a dear wreath
Of pure soul-blossoms, ever blooming on,
Unblighted by the chilling airs of earth,
Still fresh and bright, and changeless.

Dear one, thou
Art young and lovely. There are many hearts
That love thee with a deep idolatry,
But they will perish, one by one, like leaves
In the cold winds of Autumn, and the dust
Of death will cover them. Then thou wilt muse
Upon the dear mementoes they have left
Within this volume, as the Moslem dwells
Upon some relic of his prophet's tomb.
Ay, thou wilt read, and every page will tell,
In deep but voiceless eloquence, of days
Too beautiful to last. The blessed tones
Of long-lost friends in Fancy's dreaming ear
Will swell upon the twilight winds like notes
Of low Eolian melody, their eyes
Will look all mournfully in thine, their arms
Will fold thee in a dear embrace, and years
Of care and grief will seem to flee away,
And thou wilt dream thou art a girl once more.

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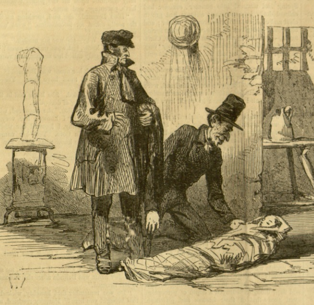

HUNTLEY PURCHASING THE BEGGAR BOY'S CORPSE.

BION, THE WANDERER;

OR,

THE FAITHLESS GUARDIAN.

A STORY OF HOME, THE OCEAN, AND OTHER CLIMES.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.,

AUTHOR OF "ORION, THE GOLD-BEATER;" "THE GUNMAKER OF MOSCOW;" "KARMEL, THE SCOUT," ETC., ETC

CHAPTER X.

THE TWO GRAVES.

Mr. Narrowgimp sat in his store again, and his feet were raised to the edge of the stove. He had just come in from his breakfast, and had taken up the morning paper. It was the morning of the fifteenth of December, and the wind blew cold, and the snow lay piled up against the doors and stoops, for there had been a storm during the night. As he read on, Mr. Narrowgimp uttered an exclamation of sudden interest, and turned towards his partner, who had entered only a few moments before, and was now warming his hands over the stove as usual.

"Ah—the work's done!" said Narrowgimp.

"What work?" asked Makepenny.

"Don't you remember, a few days ago, of reading about the sickness of the orphan boy who had lost his mother?"

"O—yes. Let's see: Huntley, wasn't it?"

"Yes."

"Well—what of him now?"

"Just read that." And as Narrowgimp spoke he handed the paper to his partner with his thumb placed against the article to which he alluded.

Mr. Makepenny took the print and read as follows:

"Gone to his Mother!—Our readers will remember that we spoke, a few days since, of the case of a poor orphan boy who lost his mother in the Autumn. We mentioned then that the little fellow's heart was literally breaking beneath the weight of agony consequent upon his bereavement. *It has broken!* Bion Huntley is no more! Though only five years of age, he already gave promise of intellect of no mean order, and his conversation was at times wonderful for its depth of thought and keen perception. But he has been cut off in the early bud of childhood, and the spirit, too pure for earth, has sought its rest in the land of the Redeemer.

"His father was lost at sea a year ago; his mother followed in her time; and now the child has been gathered in! He leaves only one relative—an uncle—an only brother of his father—Christopher Huntley, Esq.,—who mourns the loss of his beloved nephew with a grief that cannot be comforted.

"The funeral will take place at noon on the 17th inst."

This same notice was in several papers, and worded very near the same in all—so near that the man who read them all could not fail to detect the same hand in each.

And while the printer, straining his eyes over the dingy copy by the light of his lamp, was putting this notice in type, the "uncle," mourning "with a grief that could not be comforted," was busy at work preparing for the morning. Barrabas Lattimore was with him, rendering affectionate and sympathetic assistance.

As soon as Bion had been disposed of, Huntley and Lattimore went in a carriage to a wretched dwelling close by the corner of Cross and Orange streets, where their summons was answered by a poverty-stricken woman. She spoke not a word, but led the way to a small closet in the rear of the house, where, beneath a heap of rags, was found something carefully folded and tied in an old quilt. Lattimore brought it out, and having opened one corner and looked in, he turned to the woman and gave her four pieces of gold. She caught the glittering money with a convulsive grasp; and at that moment she felt thankful that her dead boy was thus enabled to bring her the means of sustaining her own life. She did not feel condemned, for the body was to have Christian burial.

The bundle was put into the coach, and then the two men were driven to the house in Pearl street. The bundle was carried up into the front room, where it was opened, and the dead boy taken out.

As the struggling rays of a single oil lamp fell upon the corpse they revealed a face of marble, with features sharp and angular, but yet regular and symmetrical. He had been a handsome boy, and very near Bion's age. The hair was the same in color, and clustered about the neck and shoulders in the same sort of wavy curls. The brow was not so high as Bion's, nor was the head so fully developed upon the top. But those things could be hidden by arranging the hair and fixing the body in its narrow resting-place.

The coffin—a handsome one of mahogany, with silver screws, and a silver plate upon the top,—was placed upon the table, and then the guardian went out and brought in two women, whom he had called to fix the body for burial.

Just at midnight Christopher Huntley stood by the side of the coffin alone. He gazed into it, and he thought how nearly that cold face resembled the face of his nephew. He stood thus, with his finger upon a soft, flaxen ringlet, moving it up over a part of the ear which was not like Bion's ear, when the heavy tones of the clock of Old Trinity came booming through the wintry night. He started at the sound, for he knew 'twas midnight; and at that moment there was something terribly awful about that mystic hour.

Hark! There is a voice in the midnight bell. It says,—

"*As you keep your faith with your dying sister, so may God do unto you!*"

Those were the words that came, and the guilty man started back from the coffin, and gazed about him as though he expected to see some spirit presence. But in a few moments the thought of the gold that would be his overcame the momentary fear, and having closed the lid of the ghostly box, he tried the doors, to be sure that they were secure, and then went into the back chamber, and threw himself upon the bed.

On the following day quite a number of people came to see the remains of the orphan boy, and among them were two young ladies from the old house in Church street. They stood for a long while over the coffin, and the tears that started to their eyes told how deeply they were moved. They had loved the gentle child, and they could not help feeling that he might have been better had he not been taken from them.

"He has changed very much," whispered the eldest sister, after viewing the face from different points of observation.

"Very much," returned the other. "I should not have known him."

"Nor should I."

And yet they did not think there was anything strange in the matter. They had often seen faces much altered in death; and they went away without the least shadow of a suspicion.

"Ha! it works well!" the wicked uncle uttered to himself, after the two girls had gone. "How they wept over him! If *they* see not deception I have no fear."

When night came again Mr. Huntley put on his coat and went out.

Lida and Lizzy were in the little attic of Old Ivory's house. They had been fed regularly by the deaf and dumb woman, but had seen no one who could speak with them. They sat upon the edge of their bed, where they had been sitting since supper, and tears were upon their dark cheeks.

"Hark!" said Lida. "I hear somebody coming."

Lizzy started up, and as she did so the tramp of heavy feet was heard in the passage leading to their room. Ere long the door was opened, and Christopher Huntley rushed in.

"Lida! Lizzy!" he cried, in well-assumed joy, "thank Heaven, I have found you at last! How came you here?" he added, seizing each by the hand.

"Oh—we was fotched by wicked white men, Mas'r Christopher," answered Lizzy. "Dey run away wid us spite ob all we could do. Oh! we is so glad!"

"The wretches!" exclaimed Huntley, with an angry expression. "I know them, and they shall smart for this! But come, girls. I have a melancholy sight for you!"

Lida clasped her hands quickly to her heart, and a stifled groan escaped from her lips. She knew too well what was meant.

"What is it, Mas'r?" asked Lizzy, who did not comprehend so quickly.

"I will tell you as we ride along. But come—let us be off out of this. The villains who brought you here shall be severely punished for this. And they won't get the money they expected, neither. Why—what d'ye suppose the rascals meant?"

The girls gazed into his face, but did not speak.

"Why," he resumed, "they stole you away and brought you here, knowing that I should offer a large reward for the discovery of your whereabouts."

"Dar!" uttered Lizzy, "dat's jus' what we 'spected. We know'd dat must be de awful meanin' ob our stealment. My soul! I 'spected noff'n once but dat dey'd kill us, dey was so ugly!"

The guardian made no further remark, but led the way from the room; and ere long they gained the street, where a carriage was in waiting. They entered it and were driven off. Several times Lida seemed upon the point of speaking, but she dared not ask the question that lay fearfully upon her thoughts. After a long, round-about drive, they reached the house from which they had been dragged, and Huntley assisted them to alight. When they reached the hall there seemed to be a solemn stillness pervading the place which was fearfully ominous.

"Mas'r," whispered Lida, "where is Bion?"

"He's safe, Lida—safe with his mother!"

The poor girl fell back to the wall, and clasped her hands over her eyes. Heavy groans burst from her lips, and her frame shook with the dreadful emotion that was upon her. She followed the guardian up the stairs—into the front room. She looked—she saw the table—she saw the coffin—a small coffin—just large enough for *him!* She started a single step forward, but she did not reach the table, she sank down upon the floor, and when Lizzy reached her, she found her in a swoon!

But we will not dwell upon this scene. Lida finally recovered, and was able to stand and view the face of him who slept. She wept bitterly, and her sobs were painful to those who heard them. Even Christopher Huntley almost pitied her. She had loved the boy—loved him with all her soul—and now that he was gone, there fell upon her heart such a sense of loneliness and despair, that, in that hour, it seemed as though life could only be a burden to her from that time forth.

All night long, the two girls watched by the side of that narrow house. They thought the boy had changed very much; yet, they concluded that they should have known him!

At noon of the following day, the funeral took place. Quite a number of people were present, drawn thither by curiosity, arising from the notices which had appeared in the papers. The clergyman offered much consolation to the surviving relative, and prayed earnestly for the soul of the departed.

Away in one corner of the room was a woman, meanly clad, who kept her head bowed to hide the tears that would not be stayed. After the services were concluded, and many of the visitors had left, this poor woman advanced to the side of the coffin. She gazed long and earnestly upon the face of the sleeping child, and as she raised her head, she met the stern, commanding glance of Mr. Huntley. She turned quickly away, and when she reached an unobserved corner, she gave way to her feelings again.

Christopher Huntley had furnished six coaches, and when people were informed that five of them were free, they were soon filled; so the hearse was followed by quite a respectable show of importance. At a distance, followed the poor woman on foot. She had not dared to get into a carriage. But she saw the body of her child placed in consecrated ground. She saw the heavy earth piled back upon the little coffin; and when the last sod was replaced, she turned away. All were gone, save herself and the sexton. The latter gazed around when his work was done, and abruptly ordered the seeming mendicant from the place. Ah! he little dreamed that of all the people who had come to the place of burial that day, this poor woman was the only mourner—that she alone on earth had known and loved the boy whom he had buried!

But the unknown mother moved quickly away, and, as she went, she prayed that God might not hold her guilty for what she had done!

The day was towards its close when Christopher Huntley stood in the room where the funeral services had been held, and with him were Lida and Lizzy. The two girls had been weeping, but the guardian had commanded their attention, so they wiped their eyes, and turned towards him.

"Well, girls—what do you mean to do now?"

As they heard this question, they were for the first time brought to think of the future. They gazed first upon the speaker, and then at each other.

At this moment, some one knocked at the door. Mr. Huntley opened it, and found Mrs. Gambald there—the woman who kept the large boarding-house in Church street. She had come to see if Lida and Lizzy had been engaged. Mr. Huntley's face brightened in a moment, for this offer on the part of one whom the girls well knew relieved him of quite a burden.

The woman asked Lida if she would come and live with her. The answer was a direct affirmative. The same question was put to Lizzy, and she answered with the same promptness and to the same effect. Before nine o'clock that evening the two girls were duly installed in their domestic places at the great house, and their clothing had been all deposited in their new home.

Mr. Huntley asked them how much was due them for labor done since the death of their mistress; but they had no idea about it. Mrs. Huntley had given them all they wanted; and beyond that there had been no arrangement. They had been her slaves and she had given them liberty. Christopher offered them fifty dollars each—in silver coin. The sum and the glittering bulk, seemed enormous to them, and they took it gratefully.

And thus was the plotting uncle well nigh delivered from his hardest work. Only one more thing was necessary to fill up the measure of deception in which the dead boy had played so important a part, and that was a proper mark for the grave. This he attended to at once, and by the advice of Lattimore he had a stone erected to agree in appearance somewhat with the social position of him who was supposed to sleep beneath. No stone had yet been erected over the grave of his sister-in-law, and he had them both made now.

In due time two handsome marble slabs were put up over two graves that lay side by side. The larger one bore the name of "Belinda Huntley, aged 27; Relict of Gideon Huntley, Esq., who was lost at sea in a foreign clime." There was an appropriate motto; and the device upon the stone was very neat.

The second stone bore the following:—

"ERECTED
To the memory of
BION HUNTLEY,
Aged 4 yrs. and ten mos.,
Only child of
Gideon and Belinda Huntley,
of New Orleans, La.

The father lies buried beneath a foreign sea, while mother and child sleep here. May their souls meet in Heaven."

The men who put up these stones observed a miserable looking woman who stood apart and watched them narrowly. When they were gone she moved towards the spot and read the inscriptions upon the marble.

She stood a long while over the grave of the boy, and when she finally walked slowly away there was a prayer upon her lips. It was an old prayer with her. She prayed to God that he might not hold her guilty for what she had done!

CHAPTER XI.

CORA.

When Bion awoke in the morning he started up and gazed about him, and at length the circumstances of the previous evening came to his mind. He arose and dressed himself as far as he could, and then sat down and looked out at the window; but all he could see was a dingy wall of bricks some six feet distant. He looked up, and he looked down; then he gazed upon one side, and then upon the other,—but only that same brick wall could he see. He made up his mind at once that he would not have such a chamber. He had just lowered the curtain when the door was opened, and Margery Grutt entered.

"Ah, my leetle man, I'm glad to see ye a lookin' so bright this mornin'."

As she spoke she advanced and took the boy's hand. He gazed up into her face, and, with all her ugliness, he felt a sort of trust in her at that moment. She spoke kindly, and then there was something in the grasp she gave his hand that seemed to evince good feeling.

"How does my leetle man feel this mornin'?"

"Pretty well, ma'am. Has Lida come yet?"

"No—Lida is'n't here."

"Perhaps it is too early for her to come now."

The woman did not reply at once. She gazed into the child's upturned face, and seemed to be pondering upon the course she should pursue. Finally she went and sat down upon the chair by the side of the bed, and drew the lad to her knee.

"Bion," she said, in a very low, persuasive tone, overcoming the horrible cracking of her voice by speaking just above a whisper, "do ye know 'at yer oonkle haint done jest as he ought to 'a' done. Now doant be a feared, 'cause I'm a goin' to be a friend to ye. Jest as true as ye live, me leetle darlin,' I'll take good care on ye."

"*You'll* take care of me?" cried the boy, with sudden alarm. "O—no, no,—Lida and Lizzy 'll take care of me!"

"You must wait till ye hear me all through, Bion. Now you jest listen: I said as how't yer oonkle had been not jest as he'd ought to 'a' been. In the first place he's made ye think yer name was *Huntley*,—haint he?"

"My name *is* Huntley."

"O—it's too bad? Do tell me ef he's made ye believe it so strong! Do ye railly think yer name's Huntley?"

"My name is Bion Huntley."

"Why—bless yer sweet leetle soul, me pooty man, ye was never more mistaken. Yer father's name was *Bernard*. I knowed him well. He named you Bion—Bion Bernard. He went away, an' got killed by lightnin' in a storm among the mount'ns. Do tell me ef ye railly think yer name is Huntley?"

The poor boy looked up utterly bewildered.

"*Bernard?*" he murmured. "I never heard the name before."

"Bless me! Why—don't ye remember yer father?"

"Yes—I think I do. We lived away off in New Orleans when he went away. But he isn't dead. He's coming back."

"Coming back? Why—I never! What in marcy's name put that into yer head?"

"My mother told me so."

"Yer mother? Why—ye can't remember her, me son."

"Yes, I can."

Mrs. Grutt pondered a few moments, and then resumed,—

"Well, well, never mind. I remember now. Yer mother didn't know 'at yer father was dead; but he is. His name was Bernard. Yer mother's name was Bernard, too. But ye see, Huntley's only the name of the house ye used to live in—that's all."

"I shall ask Lida. She'll know," said the boy, in a tone of relief.

"Ah, me sweet, dear leetle man, ye'll have to ask me ef ye want to know anything. Lida and Lizzy's both gone off!"

The child started back a pace, and gazed eagerly into the woman's face; but ere he could speak she continued,—

"They've both gone off, Bion, and they wont never come back any more. A man came from clear 'way off ever so far and got 'em. They tried to stay, but he wouldn't let 'em. Yer oonkle Christopher wa'n't yer oonkle at all. I used to know yer father and mother, both; and so I am goin' to take yer and take care of ye. Oho—we'll have some very fine times, wont we?"

Bion was partly bewildered still. It was all too much for him to comprehend.

"When will Uncle Christopher come?" he asked.

"Marcy sakes, boy,—didn't I tell ye ye hadn't got no oonkle Christopher? The man as pertended to be yer oonkle wa'n't no sich thing! He's gone off, too. He's gone off ever so far.'

"But he came with me here last night."

"Yes—and then started right off in a great big ship. He won't come back no more,—so ye mustn't think of him."

"No Lida! No Lizzy! No uncle!" whispered the boy, in a hushed, breathless tone.

"But ye've got a good Aunt Margery, me sweet boy."

Bion gazed a moment longer into the woman's face, and then he moved to the bed and threw himself upon it. A deep, rending groan burst from his lips, and in a moment more he wept most bitterly. Margery spoke to him but he noticed her not. He cried as he had never cried before, for now he had no one left to love him—no one whom he knew or cared for. *Lida and Lizzy gone!* No heavier calamity could have befallen him?

The woman withdrew from the apartment, and carefully closed the door behind her, leaving the poor orphan to cry by himself.

An hour passed away, and still Bion lay upon the bed. His tears had become exhausted, and his sobs were low and painful. As he lay thus he heard the door open, and soon he felt a light touch upon his arm. He started up expecting to see the great, red face of Margery Grutt. But he was disappointed—and most strangely disappointed, too. His sobs ceased, and a warm light beamed in his dark eye.

He saw before him a girl of about his own age. She was a beautiful creature, light and fairy-like, with large blue eyes; soft, silky, sunny curls hanging over her neck and shoulders; features regular and handsome; with dimples in her cheek and chin. There was a waking smile upon her face, and one little white hand was resting upon his arm.

"Bion," she said, in a tone that sounded like heavenly music in memory of the harsh, grunting tones of Margery, "won't you let me love you? Come—I will love you very well."

The boy's head sank forward, and his arms were wound about the girl's neck. There was something in her look and tone that led him to do this. She returned his embrace, and when he began to weep again she wept, too.

At length he raised his head, and gazed into her face once more. He had never seen anything more beautiful, and he held on upon her waist, as though fearful of losing her.

"Do you live here?" he asked.

"Yes," she replied.

"Is Margery your mother?"

"No. I haven't got any mother. My mother died ever so many years ago. I live with Aunt Margery, and she takes care of me. And she says you are going to live here, too. O—how glad I am. You won't run away and leave me, will you? I will be very good; and I will love you a good deal; and I will wipe your eyes when you cry."

"What's your name?"

"My name is Cora—Cora Page. And your name is Bion."

"Bion Huntley," said the boy.

"Aunt Margery told me it was Bion Bernard."

"I don't think she knows. I am sure it is Huntley."

"But it is Bion?"

"Yes."

"Well—won't you love me, Bion?"

The boy threw his arms around her neck again, and said he would love her as well as he could.

"How long have you been here?" he asked, after awhile.

"I don't know. I think I have always lived here. I don't know anybody only Aunt Margery and Black Peggy; and sometimes Johnny, that comes to bring milk and butter and eggs."

"Is Aunt Margery good?"

The girl cast her eyes quickly about the room, and then replied in a hesitating tone—

"She's pretty good. She's good when she don't drink rum. Sometimes she drinks so much naughty rum that she has to sit down; and then she's bad if she wants to be. But," the child continued, earnestly, "perhaps we can keep hid when she is so—only you must be very good when you see her funny eyes begin to keep shut up ever so long, and then open quick, just as though she couldn't see as she wanted to. You won't make her angry, then."

"No. I'll do anything you say," cried Bion, gazing earnestly into his companion's face. "Come—sit down here with me. I want to talk with you. I think I love you now, Cora. *Cora*—I think you have got a very pretty name."

"So you have got a pretty name," rejoined the girl, modestly.

"Do you like it?"

"I do, certainly."

"I am glad of that. But how came you to be here? Is this old woman your real aunt?"

Cora gazed into Bion's face with a troubled expression. But finally she said—

"I think she is. What is an aunt?"

"Why—an aunt is—is—I guess a woman that lives with your mother, and takes care of you. At any rate, anybody can't be a real aunt without they live with your mother or do something with your mother."

"Well," returned the girl, thoughtfully, "I guess she is my aunt."

"And do you know who brought you here?"

"Not unless my mother did."

Bion was upon the point of replying, when a heavy step was heard in the passage. They both knew who made that footfall, and without speaking further they awaited the coming of their "*Aunt*."

And while she is coming we will tell Cora's story in a very few words:

Many years before—say six-and-twenty, or thirty—a young man came to the great city, from the South, and commenced business. At the age of one-and-twenty he took a wife, by whom he had one son. Shortly after the birth of the boy the mother died. The husband and father, who was a warm-hearted, generous man, mourned deeply for the loss of his wife, and held her image in his soul many years. Meanwhile the boy grew to growth, and was sent to school. The father continued his business and amassed much wealth. After twenty years of widowerhood the merchant became acquainted with a woman whom he loved and respected, and by whom he was loved and respected in turn. He was yet in the prime of life, and with a strong, healthy constitution, he had the promise of many years more on earth. He could not live in peace and enjoyment without a companion in whom he could confide in every hour, and he married again.

At the age of one-and-twenty the son came home from college. He professed much joy at finding so fair and good a step-mother; but in his heart he cherished feelings the most bitter and dangerous. This marriage would rob him of a large portion of his father's wealth, and if a child were born he would lose much more.

Ere long after he returned, his step-mother gave birth to a daughter. The son was sore distressed at this double innovation, and dark schemes grew up in his mind. And he saw his father worship this new child, too. By and by, when the infant was only six months old, the mother sickened and died. Within a month afterwards the infant was stolen away, and the bereaved father could not find it. The son was away at the time, or was supposed to be away; yet the poor father could not help suspecting him.

Time passed on, and finally, by his studious attention and seeming love, the son managed to remove the suspicion which he knew dwelt in his father's bosom. Yet the merchant could be happy no more. The second wife had been loved fondly, and when she died an aching void was left. But though the sunlight of his joy was gone, yet a gentle star, bright and pure, shedding a soft glow over his way, was left to comfort him. But, alas! when that, too, was snatched away, and in so terrible a manner, his heart sank in utter night.

And thus the son became once more heir apparent to the large fortune! The infant was not killed. The scheming son could not bear the thought of murder upon his soul, so he had the innocently offending child cared for by one who, he was assured, would never suffer it to come back to block up his pathway to wealth!

That infant received the name of CORA PAGE; and in time, when the dimples upon her rosy cheeks had become more beautiful, and her heart had grown to want companionship, she met another child whose fate had been cast with her own, and she was told that she must always call him BION BERNARD.

When Aunt Margery entered the room she found the children sitting side by side, each with one arm round the other.

"Ah, me pooty darlins," she cried, "ye've found each other out, haint ye? Now I hope ye'll be good leetle children, because if ye be I may let ye play together. But ef ye should go for to cry, or such like stuff, I may take ye away from one another; 'cause I don't love children what cries much. In course when ye hurt yerselves very bad, or feel sick, I don't mind yer cryin' a leetle—jest a leetle. There—now be good children—you, Cora Page, and you Bion Bernard."

"I think my name is *Huntley*, ma'am," remonstrated the boy, timidly.

"Ye do?" returned Margery, with a keen, meaning glance.

"Yes, ma'am—I know it is; because my mother's name was Huntley; and my Uncle Christopher's name was Huntley;—and then I remember very well of hearing Miss Gambald tell her sister, who had just come home from school, that that was my name."

"Well—now—I never!" uttered Margery Grutt, with a very strange shaking of the head. "Ef yer name *is* Huntley, then I've made a terrible mistake. I was willin' to let Bion Bernard play with my leetle good darlin' Cora; but ef yer name aint Bernard, then I shouldn't dare's t' let ye be with her. So ye'll have to stay here all sole alone, like a hermit with long beard shet up inside of a great rock! I'm sorry—I am sartin; but, marry! I never should dare's t' let ye play together!"

"Oh, yes!" cried Cora, who knew the woman well, and hence understood the corrective meaning of her curious speech; "your name is Bernard! It is, isn't it?"

The poor boy was bewildered. He gazed first into the sweet face of Cora, and then at the ugly-looking face of the woman.

"Never mind, now," Aunt Margery said, with a quick, meaning glance at the girl. "I shall leave ye a leetle while, and let ye eat breakfast together; and *perhaps* me leetle man may remember his name."

Just as she ceased speaking, the door was pushed further open, and a dumpy, greasy negro woman, past the middle age, entered, bearing in her hands a tray, well filled with food and warm drink. This was Black Peggy. She set the tray down upon the little table, and then both she and her mistress departed, and closed the door after them.

The food was of the choicest kind—more nice and rare than usual—for a new boarder was to be satisfied. The two children moved their chairs to the table, and when Bion saw how happy and grateful his companion was, he could not help forgetting much of his sorrow. She had been suddenly lifted to a companionship for which her heart had long prayed, and her chief aim and desire now was, to render that companionship as happy as she could.

"Bion," she said, as soon as they had taken their seats at the table, "I guess your name is Bernard, isn't it?"

"What makes you think so?" he asked, earnestly.

"Why—because Aunt Margery says so. Oh! you must let me call you so, because if you don't, she wont let us be together. She told me that your father and mother were both dead, and that your uncle had gone away, and left you here to live with her."

"My mother is dead," replied the boy, sadly. "She died before the cold snow came. But I didn't know that my father was dead. I know my uncle brought me here; and I think he was very naughty, because he told me a wrong story about it."

Cora reached forth her dimpled hand, and placed it upon the boy's arm, and while she gazed earnestly into his face, she said, with deep emotion—

"Bion, I will love you better than your uncle did. Oh! love me, too; and stay with me. Be Bion Bernard, and then we shall not be taken away from each other. Oh! I wish you would try to love me well enough to do so!"

The boy thought of his mother—she was dead. He thought of his father—he might be dead. He thought of Lida and Lizzy—they were gone far away. He thought of his uncle—and a cold shudder crept through his frame. Then he gazed into Cora's face, and, while the warm tears gathered in his eyes, he threw his arms about her, and cried,—

"I will love you. I will be BION BERNARD!"

CHAPTER XII.

PROGRESS.

When the snows of winter were all gone, and the springtime had come, Christopher Huntley took the necessary steps for becoming possessed of his brother's property. The work was not difficult, for the boy's death was very easily proved; and it was also proved that Christopher was the only living relative known to the law. In this work, Barrabas Lattimore did not show his hand. He stood behind the curtain, and moved some of the wires; but an attorney of known respectability, named Latham, was made the innocent tool for consummating the scheming uncle's plot; and henceforth he became Huntley's regular business lawyer.

Awhile, the false guardian rested from labor; but he found no enjoyment in idleness. Conscience fed upon it, and he had no desire for the growth of such an unpleasant companion. So he looked about him, and finally concluded to enter the mercantile business. His heavy capital enabled him to commence on a large scale. Money happened to be very scarce; failures were frequent; and, as he thus had opportunity to buy up large quantities of stock, at mere nominal prices, he commenced to make money very soon.

People gazed upon the new merchant, and were anxious to make his acquaintance. His credit was not only known to be above all possible suspicion, but he had a hundred and fifty thousand dollars of available property, not invested in his business. Attentions and civilities rained down upon him from all quarters of the aristocratic heavens, and he fancied he had stepped into a sphere of unalloyed bliss. It was all new and strange, and in the whirl of glittering circumstance he forgot his wickedness, and turned his face only towards the rising sun. He saw no spots upon the bright disc—he saw only a glare of effulgence. He forgot that suns sometimes become darkened and lost long ere the night comes on!

His original understanding with Lattimore had been, that five thousand dollars should be paid down, and the remaining five thousand handed over as soon as the work was completely done;—that is—when the orphan heir should have forgotten all knowledge of his birth and parentage; but as money began to flow in upon him, Lattimore became anxious for "more," and finally Huntley paid him the whole sum agreed upon.

Thus he fancied he was clear of the attorney, save that the latter was to draw upon him once a year for the maintenance of the orphan.

And did the merchant ever think of the pale, friendless boy, whom he had robbed of a birth-right? Sometimes he met those who were boarding in the large house in Church street, and when he did so, he invariably felt uneasy. And often at night, when he was all alone, there came a soft and mournful, but yet earnest voice;—it sounded in his waking hours, and he heard it in his sleep:—"*As you keep your faith with your dying sister, so may God do unto you!*"

And then, when he would try to shut out the voice, it would sound again, and he heard it say:—"*Do I not thus ask God to bless you?*" He tried, in such moments, to believe he was blessed; but he shut his eyes, and trembled when he spoke the lie to his soul!

By and by, the merchant became tired of living alone. No, no—not of living *alone*. Ah, no,—he became tired of living with that VOICE! For a whole year he had done business as a merchant. Spring had warmed into summer, summer had calmed down into autumn; autumn had grown chill and cold, even to snow-crowned winter; and old winter had given up the sway to joyous spring again,—and, during all the time of change, Christopher Huntley had been making money very rapidly. And during all the while, too, his only companion in his hours of retirement had been that low, mournful, earnest VOICE! He could not bear it. He must have another companion. Women who would be too happy to accept his hand, were very plentiful. He bought him a sumptuous mansion, and then selected the woman he would have for a wife.

He was married, and he had obtained a wife who could make music and song for him. She was young and buoyant, and in giving her hand to the wealthy merchant she had obeyed the commands of her parents. She was a happy, joyous creature; and when she found how her presence could drive the melancholy cloud from her husband's brow; and how he sought her companionship, and clung to her for enjoyment, and hung upon her song and prattle with delight, she came to love him very much. She would sometimes come upon him unexpectedly, and find him sad and thoughtful; and at such times he would brighten up as she spoke, and finally grow lively beneath her efforts to please him. Hence she saw that he was dependent upon her for his joys, and, like a true wife, she tried to do her duty. She succeeded for a while.

In the meantime Bion had found all his joy of life in the companionship of Cora Page. The very few people who saw the two children wondered exceedingly at their surprising speech. They seemed to speak with the understanding of age, and their thoughts betrayed a depth of perception even above that of their hostess and guardian. But to the intelligent student of human nature there would have been nothing inexplicable. The very instincts of their nature were pure and elevated, and in all their intercourse with those about them they only retained that which was in harmony with their feelings.

Perhaps Cora presented the most interesting study. She had been with Margery Grutt from infancy, conversing only with her and Black Peggy, both of whom were illiterate and ignorant; and yet her speech was marked by a purity that existed nowhere about her, save in her own soul. Everything evil either excited her fear or her pity, and for the sins of Margery she suffered much. But the strangest part of all was: whence came the little girl's vocabulary of language? It is easy to see how a pure spirit may dwell amid darkness always and never lose its inner light; but it is not so easy to determine how an infant can be placed among those who speak only a coarse, impure language, and yet grow up with pure speech upon her tongue.

However, may we not reason thus: The pure mind will naturally call to its aid only those vehicles of thought which are the most pleasing and graceful; for the veriest savage can select and admire the sweetest sounds when his passions are at rest. The deafening din of the war-dance and whoop is not alone the music of the savage. He loves the sighing of the wind, and the murmur of the brooklet; and the dusky maiden of the wilderness is listened to with the most interest when she sings the sweetest.

And then even Aunt Margery had spoken some tender words to the girl. In moments of tender feeling she had called into use the finest language she could command. The ear of the child, detecting those words which were the most pleasing, and which seemed to convey the most affection, had conveyed them to the heart where they had been retained. So that, from various circumstances and causes, the bright-eyed girl had started into life with an understanding of truth and duty, and an appreciation of good speech and good manners, which few children of her age could boast of.

In such companionship Bion soon became contented. For a few weeks he asked after Lida, and at times he wept because he could not see her. But he never mourned because of the absence of his uncle. By kind, but persistent efforts, Margery strove to teach him that the man who brought him there was not his uncle at all; and she at length managed to work the belief into his mind. But when she came to tell him that the woman who had taken care of him, and who died in the great house nearly a year before, was not his mother, she found the task more difficult. Yet she did not show any uneasiness. She only labored calmly and carefully, feeling sure that in time she could work the change she sought.

It was not a great while before the boy began to ponder upon the subject of his true name. All whom he saw—who spoke with him—called him Bion Bernard; and in time he came to think that must be his name. Sometimes, when all alone, the name, "*Huntley*," would arise to his lips, but gradually it began to grow dim in his memory, until at length it seemed only an old familiar sound without meaning of any kind.

One night, when Margery came to undress the boy, she had him remove his under garments to put on clean ones. It was spring, and he had been there nearly four months. It was the first time she had been present when he changed his under-clothes, and as he bared his white neck her quick eye caught the golden chain and locket.

"Aha! Why, me leetle darlin' what have ye got here?"

"It is my father and mother," he said, trembling; for the fear came quickly over him that he might lose the talisman.

"Let me look at it, my son." And as she spoke she took the locket in her hand, and made a motion towards removing it from his neck.

"No! no!" he cried, starting back. "Oh! good Aunt Margery—don't take it away from me. Oh! don't! I'll be good! Don't take it away!"

The woman had showed signs of anger at first, but as the boy begged so earnestly she softened down, and told him she would not keep it then. She opened the locket, and holding the candle down she gazed upon the two faces therein contained. For some moments she looked earnestly upon the pictures, and then she turned her eyes to the face of the boy.

"Hadn't you better let me take this and keep it for ye?" she said, persuasively.

"O, no. Don't take it away from me."

"But I'll take good care of it. You may lose it. Only think, me darlin', how bad ye'd feel if ye should lose it. Now I'll take care of it for ye, and when ye get older ye shall have it."

"But it is my mother! Oh! don't take it away!"

Margery Grutt pondered upon the subject for some time. Should she be doing her duty if she allowed the boy to keep the locket! Would it not be the means of keeping a knowledge of his mother alive in his mind? She had learned to love the little fellow, he was so kind and gentle, and so affectionate; but she had her duty to do. She had engaged to give the child up at a certain age totally ignorant upon all the points touching his birth, parentage, and name.

"Bion Bernard," she said, speaking as though she really asked for information, "what was this woman's name?"

"Name? Why—she was my mother."

"Aye—I know, but what was her name?"

"Why—I only called her mother, and mamma—that's all."

"Do you think her name was Bernard?"

"O—I guess it must have been. Yes—don't you think it was?"

Margery was pleased. She knew that in this reply there was nothing of deception.

"You are right, Bion," she answered, with an encouraging smile. "I knowed her very well. Why—me leetle sonny, I knowed her when she wa'n't no bigger 'n Cora. Yes—her name was Bernard. And d'ye know what made her name Bernard?"

"No, ma'am," returned the boy.

"Ye don't?"

"No, ma'am."

"Her name wasn't always Bernard. Her name was *Belinda*, oncet. But when she married yer dear, good papa, she took his name, and that was, Bernard. Now d'ye understand?"

The boy gazed into the woman's face, and a beam of intelligence was struggling upon his handsome features.

"*Belinda*, did you say?" he finally asked.

"Yes, me leetle darlin'."

"I remember it now. I think you must know all about it."

"Oho—I *know* I know all about it, me sonny. Yes—her name was Belinda afore she was married to Mr. Bernard."

"Do you remember that haughty, wicked man that brought you here?" Margery resumed, after a short pause, during which Bion seemed to be studying deeply.

"I was just thinking of him," was the reply.

"Ah? And what was ye a thinkin' 'bout him?"

"I was trying to think how he looked"

"Well—could ye remember?"

"I think so. But I should know him right off if I should see him."

"In course ye would. But d'ye remember his name?"

"Wasn't his name Huntley?"

"Yes, me leetle darlin'. And don't ye remember 'at he tried to make ye think yer own name was Huntley?"

"Oh—yes—I remember now," cried the boy, quickly. "Yes, yes,—I was trying to think about that."

"Well—I wouldn't try to think about it any more, Bion," suggested Margery, feeling that she had asked one question too much.

However she saw that the boy was losing the memory of earlier times very fast, and she concluded to let him keep the locket; but she exacted a promise from him that he would allow no one else to see it while he remained there.

"Only Cora," replied the child. "She has seen it already."

"Well—it don't matter so much about her; only I guess ye'd better not open it much. It'll wear out ef ye do. Now jest come here, me leetle son."

Thus speaking she drew him to her knee and placed one hand upon his head.

"Bion," she resumed, in a tone which sounded soft from its very kindness, "I love you, d'ye know it?"

"I'm sure you do, Aunt Margery," the little fellow returned, with moistening eyes.

"I do, Bion; and I want ye to be happy and good. Now I ought to take that 'ere gold thing away from ye. O—don't tremble yet. I didn't say I was a goin' to take it; I only said as how't I'd ought 'o. But I want to please ye. So now jest mind this: Ef I let ye keep the pictures will ye promise not to show 'em to a livin' soul while ye're in this house, only to Cora; and not to her any more'n ye can help. I wish ye'd remember this."

"I will," cried the boy, earnestly. "I wont look at it—I wont open it—often at all. I'll be very careful. There shan't anybody know that I've got it. Oh! I'm so glad you wont take it away. I'll be very good to you for this."

"You are always good, Bion. I couldn't ask you to be any better. If you was naughty, I should be a very different woman from what I am now."

"You are very good to me; and you are very good to little Cora, too. Cora told me if I minded you, you would be good to me; and she said she loved you very much."

"Did she say so?" asked Margery, earnestly.

"Yes, ma'am. She said she loved you very much, and she wished she could make you happy always."

"She did—she did," murmured the rough, hard woman, turning away her head. She wiped something from her eye, and then kissed the boy, and bade him good night.

Margery Grutt did not fully realize what a wonderful change that little girl had worked in her soul. For long years she had lived there in that house, and her deeds had not been such as seek the light of day. She had taken several children to bring up before Cora came; but they had been mischievous, cross-grained things, and her disposition, naturally rather sharp and bitter, had not been much softened thereby. But as Cora grew up to talk and laugh, her sweetness of temper had much effect upon the hard heart, and gradually worked such a change in it, that even its owner was surprised.

But the coming of Bion was lacking to finish the work. In him she found another disposition as sweet and gentle under kindness, as was Cora's; and his peculiar mildness of manner and earnestness of devotion affected her deeply. If ever she questioned the right of the guardianship she exercised over them, she immediately answered her queries by inwardly saying that if she didn't keep them, somebody else would, and then they might not be treated so well.

No—in this matter Margery was not troubled by conscience. She persuaded herself—and firmly, too—that she was a sort of protector—that the relatives of the children had cast them out, and she had taken them in to care for and protect them. And perhaps it was well she did think so; for, looking upon herself in this light, she naturally tried to bear the assertion out in fact, and hence the children were really cared for. She would have them well dressed, and possessing such articles as could conduce to their comfort; and, to this end, she often applied for more money than was necessary for their simple sustenance. And she applied to those, too, who dare not refuse her.

As time passed on, the two children became more and more attached to each other, and beneath the gentle influence of Cora's companionship, Bion was slowly, but surely, losing from his memory the already dim life-pictures of the past.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

◆

VENGEANCE.

God judge between us—the hour remembers
When first you drew me to your treacherous breast;
And with the words of deep deceit beguiled me,
Look you! His vengeance will not let you rest.
His sword is sharp—its stroke is *ever* strong;
And it *will* smite you, though it tarry long.

CLARA SYDNEY

◆

WHAT CHILDREN SHOULD STUDY.

The studies to which a youth should pay the most close attention are those which bear most directly upon that profession which he is intended to pursue, or the station that he is destined to fill in society; but a boy of the lowest rank of society ought to have a superior education if his genius be evident. This is an important matter, which has hitherto been shamefully neglected. Here is a school, for instance, containing fifty boys, all of different constitutions, tastes, habits, and inclinations,—all are taught alike, although every one will most probably occupy a different position in the vast scale of society. The shy and the bold—the student and the dunce—the industrious and the lazy—in short one and all undergo a course of tuition which has not the slightest reference to their future course. The *bias* of the child's mind is unobserved; and therefore with a half paralyzed mind he goes forth into the world unfitted for his particular part of the business of life. How many a mind has been blunted by this process!

Another great fault in general education seems to us to be the *forced* study of what are called the learned languages. Not that we would disparage the usefulness of Latin and Greek, but we *do* assert that in these days when translations abound, not one man in a thousand needs to study the originals. Some youths have a singular inaptitude for acquiring foreign tongues. What to others would be easy and pleasant, to such could be nothing but difficult and disagreeable; to cram Latin and Greek down the throats of those to whom the dose is unpalatable is the height of absurdity; such a course cramps the mind, and breeds a disgust for *all* knowledge. If there be an inclination to pursue classical studies, well and good; but the current of knowledge should never be diverted from the channel into which it would spontaneously flow.

◆

DIMENSIONS OF EUROPEAN CHURCHES.

The *Roman Advertiser*, in an article compiled to show the impossibility of St. Peter's at Rome being ever crowded, gives some curious statistics as to the comparative capacity of the most celebrated churches in Europe. We add a column, exhibiting the number of square yards. Those who attended at St. Peter's during the august ceremonies of Christmas-day might, perhaps, have imagined that temple, in all parts open to the public during the function, as much crowded as possible. To show the impossibility of St. Peter's being ever crowded, we annex the following statistics of its capabilities, as compared with other great churches, allowing four persons to every quadrate meter (square yard):—

	Persons.	Sq. yds.
St. Peter's	54,000	13,500
Milan Cathedral	37,000	9,250
St. Paul's, at Rome	32,000	8,000
St. Paul's, at London	25,600	6,400
St. Petronio, at Bologna	24,400	6,100
Florence Cathedral	24,300	6,075
Antwerp Cathedral	24,000	6,000
St. Sophia's, at Constantinople	23,000	5,750
St. John, Lateran	22,900	5,725
Notre Dame, at Paris	21,000	5,250
Pisa Cathedral	13,000	3,250
St. Stephen's, at Vienna	12,400	3,100
St. Dominick's, at Bologna	12,000	3,000
St. Peter's, at Bologna	11,400	2,850
Cathedral of Siena	11,000	2,750
St. Mark's, Venice	7,000	1,750

The Piazza of St. Peter's, in its widest limits allowing twelve (persons) to the quadrate meter (square yard), holds 624,000; allowing four to the same, drawn up in military array, 208,000. In its narrower limits, not comprising the porticoes of the Piazza Rusticucci, 474,000 crowded, and 138,000 in military array.

◆

WALKING.

Walking is good, not merely stepping from shop to shop, or from neighbor to neighbor, but stretching out into the country, to the freshest fields and highest ridges, and quiet lanes. However sullen the imagination may have been among its griefs at home, here it cheers up and smiles. However listless the limbs may have been sustaining a too heavy heart, here they are braced, and the lagging gait becomes buoyant again. However perverse the memory may have been in presenting all that was agonizing, and insisting only on what cannot be retrieved, here it is first disregarded, and then it sleeps; and the sleep of the memory is the day in Paradise to the unhapyy. The mere breathing of the cold wind on the face of the commonest highway, is rest and comfort, which must be felt at such times to be believed.

◆

UPRIGHT MEN.

We love upright men. Pull them this way and the other and they only bend, but never break. Trip them down and in a trice they are on their feet again. Bury them in the mud and in an hour they would be out and bright. You cannot keep them down—you cannot destroy them. They are the salt of the earth. Who but they start any noble project? They build our cities, whiten the ocean with their sails, and blacken the heavens with the smoke of their cars. Look to them, young men, and take courage. Imitate their example, and catch the spark of their energy.

◆

WOMAN.—Of all other views a man may, in time, grow tired, but in the countenance of woman there is a variety which sets weariness at defiance. "The divine right of beauty," says Junius, "is the only divine right a man can acknowledge, and a pretty woman the only tyrant he is not authorized to resist."

MAN.

BY C. D. STUART.

The glory of Man! like a gush of the breeze
  That leaps from the thunder-cloud strong,
And lifts up the limbs and the leaves of the trees,
  And dies as it passes along:
Like the wrath of the surge as it breaks on the shore,
  Provoked by the wing of the blast,
To melt, as it dashes the rock with a roar,
  And forever and ever be past!

The fame of a Man! like the dew on the turf,
  Which a glance of the sun has consumed;
Like a dream, or the spray on the brow of the surf,
  Or the flash of a swift eagle's plume;
An echo, forgot ere it came to the ear;
  A presence, which never was felt;
A shrine, with the footsteps of worshippers near,
  But lost ere they found it and knelt.

The strength of a Man! like a feather sent out
  To fetter the storm-spirit's feet;
A leaf, in the arms of the hurricane stout;
  A snail, on the lightning's back fleet:
A mote, to be lost in the folds of the grass;
  A sigh, in the ear of the gale;
A drop, in the ocean to quiver and pass—
  No echo to whisper the tale.

The hope of a Man! 'tis as high as the stars;
  As deep as the fathomless space;
As strong as the earthquake that breaketh its bars,
  And swift as the light in its race:
The glory and fame, and the strength shall decay,
  But the hope of the spirit is sure,
And fresh, when the sun and the stars fade away,
  Will forever and ever endure!

AGATHA RANDALL'S STORY.

BY AN OLD CONTRIBUTOR.

CHAPTER I.

They called me an "old maid." Perhaps it was because I lived entirely by myself, with my faithful dog, in the old homestead, where my mother had spent her brief and happy life, and where I had closed my father's eyes three years before. I was *not* old. Scarcely twenty-six years had passed over my head, and my hair was as brown, and my step as light as ever. But because, in my brief experience of the great world, I had grown tired of it, and so came back gladly to the only shelter I possessed—because I ignored the existence of the town-people, and only rambled and conversed with my faithful dog and horse—because I chose to avoid "sewing societies" and tea parties, and preferred to eat my humble crust unspiced by scandal, they marked me down at once as the very quintessence of all that was odd and disagreeable. "Miss Randall, that queer old maid," was their usual designation for me. But I never troubled myself about them.

My house—the old Randall place—was a gloomy brick castle, with massive windows, and heavy oaken doors; standing about two miles from the village of Romney, on a grass-grown cross-road but little traveled. Behind the house a small river glided quietly along towards the town, and a grove of pines stretched their dark branches over the roof. But, sloping down from the front door, towards the great gate that led out into the road, lay a beautiful flower-garden, where the most lovely blossoms bloomed and brightened in the golden sunshine, as if to make amends for the gloom and silence beyond. To go, from the front yard, through the lonesome house, and into the grove of pines, on a blue summer afternoon, when the air was still and hot, and nothing could be heard but the dropping of the fir cones, or the eager bark of "Harold," my dog, as he chased an imaginary squirrel up and down, was like going from a land of love, and life, and beauty, into the silent tomb.

I loved the place. There was not a room in that old house that had not its history—not a passage where some memory of the past did not linger. Here my mother had rocked me to sleep, each night of my infancy, softly singing all the while—there my father had sat beside me and talked of her, and her early death—in the grove behind the house I had played with my little brother Morton, who was now a wanderer in a foreign land, and in the garden, fair with flowers, I had felt my heart beat, and my pulse bound, at the sound of a voice, and the echo of a step, I should never hear again. The joys of infancy—the pleasures of childhood—the love and bliss of womanhood—all, all had been tasted here. The father—the mother—the brother, and the lover—all had gone! The draught had been drained to the very dregs, and the fairy chalice in which it had sparkled was shattered—but in the old house enchantment still remained, and the ghost of a dead hope—the shadowy seeming of a vanished joy, forever started up, as I mused alone among the quiet rooms, or walked up and down the deserted halls.

Was it any wonder, then, that the "old maid" clung to the roof that had sheltered her so long, or shrunk from a world which had only taught her how much of deceit and treachery its chosen people knew?

My life was very quiet and simple. An old woman, whose greatest recommendation in my eyes was, that she was deaf as an adder, and therefore did not care to talk, came every morning to "redd up" the house, and leave everything in readiness for me during the day. When the bent black bonnet of this worthy loomed up above the hill, Harold and I wended our way to the stable together, where "The Emperor," (a black horse, named for my historical ideal, Napoleon Bonaparte,) never failed to greet us with a joyous neigh. We three then went galloping over the hills till my repeater told the hour of eight. Returning, I was always sure to find a tempting breakfast smoking on the table, while a black bonnet could be dimly discerned, vanishing down the road at a kind of jog trot. At one o'clock my gardener came—a grave, taciturn man, who always received my orders in silence—who never forgot to give Harold a pat or whistle as he passed him, and who brushed and carded "The Emperor" each day, till his black coat shone like satin. With Mrs. Goodwin, the owner of the black bonnet, I had little converse—but James Jarvis pleased and interested me—perhaps because he seemed to love and appreciate the dumb animals that made up my world. But when I tried to talk to him, and draw him out, he seemed more reserved than ever. I found that he had a wife and four children, and that he lived in the adjoining village—beyond this his life and belongings were like a sealed book to me. Of Mrs. Goodwin's surroundings I was equally ignorant. So, at last, I came to regard myself as a kind of enchanted princess, enclosed in an old castle, and served by invisible attendants. The dreams I dreamed, as I sat in the old oaken parlor day after day! You would only smile at my folly, reader, if I should write them here. Let them rest.

I was not always alone, however. Gay parties of young people, some on horseback, and some in carriages, would often go flashing by, like the pageants the fairy princess always sees when she looks out of her high casement. If they met me, galloping along the road on "The Emperor," they would bow and look after me wonderingly, but if I was standing at the gate, with Harold beside me, or walking up and down the garden, they would often stop and beg some flowers. I always swung the great gate back, and let them enter to make their choice, but I said little to them. Many of them were of my own age, but I had no sympathy with them—gaudy butterflies of fashion as they were! Not one but had a gracious smile for me, or a kind caress for my dog—but they never found the way to my heart. I used to laugh in my sleeve when I heard them wish they owned the place, and could live there. I knew well how necessary to such insects is the sunshine in which they breathe, and felt assured that the gloom and silence of my old house would soon reduce them to their dull chrysalis state again.

When they had gathered flowers, and looked askance at me long enough, they would take their departure, urging me to visit them as they went. Harold always escorted them gravely to their carriages, while I remained at the gate. Then the horses would spring forward—the silver-plated harnesses would flash and glitter in the sun—a crowd of eager, smiling faces turned towards me—a waving of white and jeweled hands—a chorus of silvery voices shouting "good-bye, good-bye," and the vision would vanish, and the old silence fall around the place.

Do you ask what the "enchanted princess" would do then? She would sit in the door, with her hand upon the great Newfoundland's head, and thank Heaven, as she watched the setting sun go slowly down, that her life was not like theirs.

My life, however, was not destined always to be so pale and colorless. Some fierce excitement was needed to stir up the dormant nature within me—and before the autumn waned—it came!

As I sprang from my saddle at the roadside gate one morning, Harold came towards me with something in his mouth. I took it from him. It was a gentleman's glove, of dark brown kid, unsoiled, and marked inside with the name—"Marmaduke Ashley."

I turned it upon my hand a moment, and then hearing horses' hoofs coming rapidly up the glen, threw it down in the road again, as if I had not seen it, and busied myself with "The Emperor's" saddle girths. While I was unbuckling them a gentleman rode up, mounted on a spirited white horse, and doffing his hat, was about to speak to me. I looked up and saw a tall, straight figure, and a grave, handsome face—the next moment the white horse saw the glove lying in the road, plunged, reared, broke loose from bridle and spur, and flinging his rider in the dust, at my very feet, rushed madly along the hilly road that led to the town.

It was all over in a moment—and I, with that man lying there, so still and pale, felt like his murderer. "If I had not thrown down the glove, he would not be here," I thought, as I ran into the house for salts and cold water. Mrs. Goodwin had already gone, but Harold watched beside the stranger when I came back, and the graceful head of "The Emperor" was turned that way, as if he would gladly have assisted me if he could.

I knelt down beside him—and raised his head upon my arm. It fell back heavily—I thought he was dead, and tore open his vest to place my hand upon his heart. Thank God! it was beating, though faintly and slowly. I bathed his face in cold water, and sponged the blood away from a cut upon his forehead. At last he opened his eyes slowly, and looked up in my face.

What a shock it gave me! Through all my rejoicings for his safety, I could not but remember eyes as blue as those—eyes that had grown cold to me—and not in death! It would have been difficult to tell which of us was palest, as I helped him to his feet. I felt myself trembling from head to foot.

"You have been thrown from your horse," I said, as he put his hand to his forehead, and looked around him in a bewildered way. "If you will lean on me, I will lead you to the house. You can rest there, if you will, till you are better."

"You are very kind," he said, as he took the arm I proffered. "I feel too faint and giddy to trust myself in the saddle just now."

I led him into the breakfast room, where Mrs. Goodwin had left tokens of her presence, in the shape of a round of toast, an urn of chocolate, and some boiled eggs, put down before the fire, while my favorite cold rolls and ham were on the table by the open window. With my own hands I arranged the cushion of my easy chair, and placed him in it, beside the door, where the heat of the breakfast fire could not oppress him. I bathed his face—brushed back his heavy chestnut hair, and saw the color coming slowly back to his cheek, as I left him to himself, while I arranged the table for two.

"It was a terrible thing!" I heard him say, at last, as he covered his eyes with his hand. "I remember seeing you, Miss Randall, just before I was thrown. I was coming back to look for my glove."

"It is in the road, now, Mr. Ashley," I said, quietly. "Harold, go and fetch it—that's a fine fellow."

The dog went as I pointed out to the glove, and brought it back to me. I gave it to him.

"You knew my name from this," he said, pointing to the letters stamped inside.

"Yes."

"But how do you think I knew yours, since I had no glove to tell me, Miss Randall?"

"Many know me in the town," I said carelessly, as I put the breakfast things upon the table, and drew two chairs up, opposite to each other.

"Yes—but I have heard it from a mutual friend of ours—from one who used to know you well—from Oliver Grant."

That name! I had not heard or spoken it for years, and it was like a sharp blow to me. I turned white, and staggered back. He sprang towards me with a cry of alarm.

"My God! what have I done! Miss Randall—speak to me! What ails you!"

I called my pride and courage to my aid, and waved away his proffered help.

"I am better—it was only the heat of the room, and the fright I got at seeing you thrown a little while ago," I answered, quietly. "You were speaking of a mutual friend"—I added, keeping my face turned from him.

"Yes—of Oliver Grant. He has often spoken of you to me—and so highly, that I have longed to meet you. He has been my best friend, in a foreign country for years—perhaps you do not know it."

How should I—to whom that early dream of love and happiness, and its terrible awakening to falsehood and deceit, was a grief too deep for tears. He looked at me steadily with those eyes—so like, so like! I could have wept tears of blood every time I met their beaming glance, for the memories they awakened of other times.

We said little more of him, although I forced myself to hear his name, without a blush or sigh. We talked of a thousand other things, as we sipped our chocolate, and when, at last, he rose to go, I felt sorry to lose him so quickly. I went with him to the door.

"Take my horse," I said, as he went down the walk. "You are not fit for so long a journey yet."

He hesitated. I went straight to the gate, took off the saddle, and wheeled The Emperor around. Without another word of remonstrance he sprang upon his back.

"I may come to see you again?" he asked half doubtfully.

"Yes—if you choose," and I bent down and kissed Harold on the "beauty spot" that starred his forehead.

"Why do you love that dog so well?" asked Mr. Ashley, sudddenly.

"Because, with the exception of my horse, he is the only thing that has been faithful and true to me."

"Is that so? Perhaps, one day, you will think some one may be dearer and more faithful yet," he answered, looking straight at me, with his beautiful blue eyes.

I smiled, scornfully.

"Well—good bye, and a thousand thanks for your kindness," he said, gathering up the loose bridle. "I will bring back your horse to-morrow—will that be soon enough."

"Yes—but let no one strike him while he is gone."

"Can you think it?" he said, bending from his saddle. "I would not give him a blow, or see one offered to him, for worlds. Give me your hand."

I placed it in his. He bent lower, and his lips touched it. "Good bye," he said, and the next moment The Emperor was flying down the road like a bird.

CHAPTER II.

He came the next day, and every day, for a week. By degrees I learned to expect him, and to feel annoyed if he did not come at his usual hour. With Harold he had already made friends—and it was but a step from the good graces of the dog, to the heart of his mistress.

Something about him seemed strangely familiar to me. I often sat and gazed at him, trying to remember when, and where I had met him. For that such a meeting had taken place, I was well assured.

We sat, one evening—the last evening of the week, in the oaken parlor. I had been looking at him, for some time, as he sat in the uncertain light of the moon. At last, he became aware of my scrutiny—turned his face full towards me, and said, laughingly—

"Well—does my face please you?"

"It is very familiar," I said, evasively—"but I cannot tell in what the familiarity consists."

"How do you know that I am not your old lover—Oliver Grant?" he said, laughingly.

"Mr. Ashley!"

At the tone in which I spoke, and the hot flush that covered my face, he begged my pardon.

"You have it," said I coldly, "but remember in future, that on this subject I can bear no jesting."

"Did you love him so well, then?" he asked, drawing his chair close to mine, and speaking in a low, eager voice.

"So well, that he has embittered my whole life. So well, that at the sound of his name, a bitter pain goes through my heart—so well, that if I were to see him suddenly, even after all those years, I do not know but the shock might kill me."

I do not know what sudden impulse was on me, prompting me to confidence. Never in my life had I spoken so to any human being before. Mr. Ashley himself looked astonished—almost shocked, I thought—at my sudden, passionate revelation.

"He is fortunate," he said, briefly; and then added, after a moment's pause, "But if he should come back to you—not as he went away—not haughty and careless of your love, but seeking it as the last boon on earth—if you should know this, and should meet him suddenly—what then?"

"Then I could meet him without pain—then I should be willing to die," I answered. "But it can never, never be!"

"More impossible things have happened, Miss Randall. May I tell you something of him?"

"Yes."

"One year ago, when we were together in the desolate wilds of Australia, he fell ill; I was with him, alone—of course, I took good care of him—as good as I knew how to take. In his delirium, he pronounced a name in which I had a strong interest, for reasons of my own—it was yours. When he grew rational again, I spoke of you, and he told me the whole story, from the beginning. From the day he met you, Agatha, to the day when in this very room he bade you farewell forever—I knew all."

"Spare me.

I had hidden my face in my hands. It was a blessed thing to weep such tears as I was weeping then!

"No—you must listen yet, Agatha—dear Agatha!"

His voice startled me. I looked up, half expecting to see that recreant lover beside me, but it was Marmaduke Ashley still.

"He was but a boy then, and did not really know his own mind. Since, an unfeeling world has taught it to him. There were tears in his eyes, when he gave me a message for you. Will you have it?"

"Oh, can you doubt it?"

"Tell Agatha Randall," said he, "that in all my life I never met a woman I loved so well as I loved her. Tell her, if I was what I was then—if I was not the wreck I am—I should come and tell her this myself, and ask her to forgive me all the past—but as it is, it is impossible. But say that I shall remember her all my life, and that when I die, one of my last thoughts will be of her."

"If I was not the wreck I am," I repeated, after him. "What did he mean by that, Mr. Ashley?"

"Do you not know? Has no one told you?"

"Mr. Ashley, in all these years, I have never spoken his name to any human being—neither have I heard it till I met you."

"He was very ill, as I told you; and his health is shattered and his beauty gone. You remember how brilliantly handsome he was?"

I bowed my head. Ah, did I not? Was there a glance, or smile, or feature that was not too well remembered?

"Nothing of that remains. He has grown old; he is pale and melancholy; his curls are auburn no longer, but streaked with silver. Add to this—that he has lost his right arm——"

"When? How?"

"Last year, during a fire in Melbourne. He rescued an old man from a burning building, and injured his right arm so severely that he was obliged to have it amputated."

My heart beat so I could not speak. At last, this man, whom I had loved so tenderly, was growing worthy of my love. I had always deemed him, even when I loved him best, a beautiful but heartless Sybarite—yet, I saw him rushing through smoke and flame, like a hero as he was, to rescue a poor old man from a dreadful death. I loved him that moment better than I had ever done before.

"You have given me the best tidings I have had for years," I said, holding out my hand to Marmaduke Ashley. "I am no longer ashamed to say that I love him; that he is far dearer to me now, than he was in my girlish days. Tell him so, if you ever meet him again; tell him that Agatha Randall is proud of him, as well."

"Then this terrible change in him makes no difference with you. You would welcome him as gladly as ever, and forgive him everything."

"Yes."

"You are an angel," he said, warmly, rising to go; "and if ever in my wanderings I meet him again, I shall send him at once to you. May I, Agatha?"

"If you and he choose. But tell me one thing—what were the 'reasons' you alluded to for being interested in my name?"

We had reached the porch that led into the flower-garden, and the moon was shining brightly, as he paused and looked down at me.

"To-morrow I will come and tell you, if you choose," he said, gravely. "For the present, good night, and pleasant dreams."

He drew me nearer to him, bent down and kissed me. I stood a moment after he had left me, watching him as he passed down the road, thinking how happy I was, blest with a friend like him, and, above all, blessed in the knowledge that one for whom I had mourned for years, was, after all, true to me.

As I turned to go into the house, Harold growled noisily, and the figure of Jarvis, the gardener, came from the further end of the garden.

"I have been to see to the auriculas, Miss Randall," he said, hurriedly. "Can I see you for a few moments early in the morning?"

"Yes. Good night."

He followed Mr. Ashley down the road, and, with Harold following me, I went into the house, and locked the doors.

Early in the morning, Jarvis came. He was evidently ill at ease, and twirled his hat, and stammered so awkwardly about the garden flowers, that at last I lost my patience.

"Jarvis—I take it, you did not come here at this hour, merely to speak of English violets," I said pettishly.

"You are right, Miss Randall, I did not," was his reply.

"Then, speak out, sir!"

"I will, and if you are angry, I shall only have done my duty. Miss Randall, you have a friend in yonder place," he motioned with his head towards Romney, "at least, you think him a friend. I have seen him here with you time and again; and last night, when I came here to say what I am saying now, I saw him at your door—I saw him kiss you as he said good night."

I felt my cheeks burn, and my eyes flash with anger.

"Jarvis," I said, hotly, "understand this; those who serve me, must never watch me. If you cannot employ your spare moments better, we will part."

"I knew you would be angry," he said, with a deprecating look. "But, my dear young lady, listen to me just one moment more. He is a married man."

"Mr. Ashley? Impossible!"

"It is certainly so. My wife has seen his lady, and says she is a most charming young creature, not more than eighteen years old. The people down yonder are at their old trade of scandal—his visits here have been noticed, and other eyes than your faithful old servant's have watched you. They say—I will not tell you what they say—but, my dear young mistress, have I not done my duty in warning you of him?"

I gave him my hand.

"I appreciate your kindness, Jarvis—I thank you for it. But in reality your warning was not needed. That kiss you saw last night was only one of friendship, and Mr. Ashley has never spoken a word to me that a brother might not speak to a sister. But, under the circumstances, what would you advise me to do?"

Before my gardener could answer, three persons, two gentlemen and a lady, gallopped up the road and dismounted at the gate. I saw, at the first glance, that one of the party was Ashley—the other two were unknown to me. The lady took Marmaduke's arm, and came tripping up the walk, while the other gentleman remained behind, leaning, with his hat pulled over his eyes and his riding-cloak wrapped around him, against the fence.

Marmaduke left his companion behind—came up the steps where we were still standing, and taking both my hands in his, asked eagerly—

"Are you glad to see me, Agatha?"

"Yes," I said warmly, though the taciturn Jarvis still stood by. "But our good friend here has been trying to persuade me that it is not best to receive you here. The pure minds of the towns-people seem very much stirred up on the subject. And then you are married, you know. Oh, it will never do."

Though I spoke lightly I could not quite hide from him that I was wounded and pained by all that had happened. He uttered an indignant "pshaw!" and then turned to the lady who was bending over a bed of pinks, just below us. She was a pretty little thing, with soft brown hair, and hazel eyes, and with a face as gentle and innocent as the snow-drops by which she stood.

"Marguerite, my love, come here."

Marguerite gathered up the skirt of her blue riding-habit, and came and stood beside him, looking up at me with a happy smile.

"This is my wife, Agatha," he said, kindly. And while we spoke to each other, he turned to Jarvis and shook him by the hand.

"You are a faithful fellow, and I like you for your devotion to your mistress," he said, heartily. "And now you shall listen, with her, to a story I have to tell."

"Years ago," he said, without looking at me, "a young boy went out from this quiet place, to join his ship, and go to sea. His mother was dead—he only left a father and a sister behind him, to remember him. At last the old man died, and still the wanderer did not return. The sister grew up from a child into a woman, and lived in the old house by herself. I do not know if she ever thought of her brother—I am certain she never heard from him for many years.

"At last, when he began to weary of his life, he married one who loved him"—his dark blue eyes turned upon Marguerite, who stood beside me, with a sweet smile upon her face—"one who was dearer to him than all the world beside. Then came a longing to look once more upon that dear old home of his boyhood—to feel that sister's arm around his neck—to stand beside the grave of his father and mother. Agatha Randall," he added, with a trembling voice, "if he was to come back, and stand in the old places, would his sister welcome him?"

"Do you know my brother?" I asked, scarcely less agitated than he seemed to be.

"I do—I have known him many years. He is not far from you at this very moment."

My eyes turned towards the figure in the military cloak, which was coming slowly up the walk, from the gate.

'Is that my brother?" I asked, eagerly, and was just about to spring out to meet him, when Jarvis, who had been listening intently, threw his hat in the air, like a boy, and cried out—

"Master Morton! welcome home again!" as he grasped Marmaduke Ashley's hand.

"Morton—my brother—is it you?"

"Yes, Agatha—no longer Marmaduke Ashley, but Morton Randall. Forgive this masquerading, and welcome me home."

I threw my arms around his neck, and kissed him and my sister with a happy heart. The figure wrapped in a cloak, stood close beside me now, with averted face, and sighed.

"Agatha," said my brother, "speak to him."

I looked round wonderingly. I caught a glimpse of a worn pale face, and auburn curls, streaked with gray—of a pair of large blue eyes, sad and melancholy as they gazed at me—then the cloak fell off his shoulders, and I saw that his right arm was gone! I grew cold and pale. Oh, could it be that the dream of many years was to come true, or was it but a cruel mockery?

"Agatha," said the dear, familiar voice—"your message has brought me back. Come, darling, I have but one arm to hold you now, but the heart is sound and strong as ever."

"Oliver! Oliver! Oh, God, I thank Thee!"

Faint and giddy with this exceeding joy, I staggered towards him, and laid my head upon his breast. My eyes were blinded with tears when I tried to look up into his dear face, but I felt the soft hair that touched my cheek—I felt the lips that kissed me over and over—I knew that he was weeping, too! There was not a dry eye among us all!

Even now, with my husband here beside me, and my brother and his wife near by, my eyes fill with tears when I think of that hour. He came to me like one risen from the dead! And that I love him with a fearful, trembling joy, as if he were to be snatched away from me again, let my unceasing care and watchfulness over him show.

TRUE KNOWLEDGE.

BY ALICE CARY.

The Arabs have a proverb, which runs on this wise: "He who is ignorant of the evil which flows from men's nature, cannot fail to fall into it." A saying which, it seems to me, should more urgently commend itself to our common sense than it does. If a pitfall is in my road, I think that person who is aware of it, and fails to inform me, is little better than he who digged it beneath my feet. There is, however, a notion, and one that finds especial favor with men, that ignorance is beautiful, and on no account will they suffer their wives and daughters to know what a wicked world they are living in, lest they should be contaminated thereby. This method of educating *into*, instead of *out* of ignorance, must have a degenerating effect—it may produce very pretty dolls and playthings, but it is quite impossible that it can ever make women that *are* women. If we could be persuaded that the devil was really Gabriel, would our safety be at all enhanced? For my part, I think it would be greatly better that we should know that he is going about, seeking whom he may devour. The child will seek to take hold of the candle flame, until it has been taught by experience what fire is, for, after all, there is no knowledge which is not the growth of experience, that can be relied upon. We must have lived through that which is of absolute and positive value, and we can only teach efficaciously that which experience has taught us. I have somewhere read a story illustrative of this: Two persons were sentenced to be hanged; the one, a man of considerable eminene, and learning; the other, a poor tailor. On the scaffold, they were asked, as is customary, if they had anything to say. The man of learning made a long speech, but nobody remembered anything he said—he made a long speech, and that was all that was known. The other man said simply, that he would recommend all tailors to use short threads; and to this day, his advice is remembered, and profitable—simply, because he confined himself to what he knew, and knew thoroughly. It was said by Confucius, "To know that we know what we know, and that we do not know what we do not know, that is true knowledge." And I can see no way to attain this knowledge, except to reduce the facts of imagination to the facts of experience. We may have very good theories outside of this; but by it, and through it, we are startled into informing and intelligent convictions.

While on this subject, I must be allowed to quote a passage or two, from a writer too little read. He says: "How could youths better learn to live, than by at once trying the experimet of living? I think this would exercise their minds as much as mathematics." And he goes on to say, if he wished a boy to know something about the arts and sciences, he would not pursue the common course and send him into the neighborhood of some professor, where anything is professed and practiced but the art of life—to survey the world through a telescope or a microscope, and never with his natural eye; to study chemistry, and not learn how his bread is made, or mechanics, and not learn how it is earned; to discover new satellites to Neptune, and not detect the motes in his own eyes, or to what vagabond he is a satellite himself—or to be devoured by the monsters that swarm all around him while contemplating the monsters in a drop of vinegar. "Which," he asks, "would have advanced the most at the end of the month—the boy who had made his own jack-knife from the ore which he had dug and smelted, reading as much as would be necessary for this, or the boy who had attended the lectures on metallurgy at the Institute, in the meanwhile, and had received a Rogers' penknife from his father?—which would be the most likely to cut his fingers? While the student is reading Adam Smith, Ricardo and Say, he runs his father in debt irretrievably. To my astonishment," he continues, "I was informed when I left college that I had studied navigation! Why, if I had taken one turn down the harbor, I should have known more about it."

To return more nearly to the proverb I began with, I would say, let us have the truth—dream-destroying, lie-annihilating truth, and live by it or die by it, if we must. Ignorance is not the best and safest bliss—hell cannot be permanently covered with a sheet of white paper; and we might as well say to the unsuspecting at once,—here it is; see how it boils like a pot, and how black and ugly it is!

Vices and Virtues.—Those boast of abstinence who have lost their digestive power; those boast of chastity whose blood is cold and stagnant; those boast of knowing how to be silent who have nothing to say. In short, mankind make vices of the pleasures which they cannot enjoy, and virtues of the infirmities to which they are subject.

The Future.—Truly and beautifully has it been said, that the veil which covers futurity has been woven by the hand of Mercy.

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COMMERCE AND PEACE.

The commercial motive to peace is not of a very elevated character; and, therefore, we are not among those who believe, or even wish, that such a motive may be the destined means of introducing the great epoch of peace. We have no desire to see the day when men will not go to war simply because war is expensive and injurious to trade. We look to a higher motive, a much nobler feeling than this; and we have no doubt, that even those who employ the commercial argument experience this nobler, and are actuated by this higher motive. But even the mercantile argument is, in itself, an accessory to that which is above it, and it prepares the way among inferior minds for those nobler ends which men of high spiritual and moral feeling are ever aiming at. Commercial men, even, are not commercial only; they are also spiritual and moral; and many of the most distinguished of the mercantile class have not been more eminent for their wealth and enterprise than for their taste, their humanity, their piety, and their benevolence.

Commerce is the natural pioneer of peace. It is not the cause nor the source of it, and never can be, and sorry would it be for humanity if it were. But it is the means of removing obstacles, of bringing men personally and mentally together, with inferior motives, and thus affording them an opportunity for forming and perpetuating friendship and brotherhood under the influence of motives of a higher order. The highest motives are above the mere practical sphere; they do not make roads, build ships, construct railways, and rein the lightning to serve social communion. These practical things are born of the lower motives, but when born, the higher motives come gently and quietly forward and make use of them, as if they were their own. Such is the law of our nature—such the inevitable conditions of human progress.

"DIEM PERDIDI!"

A Roman Emperor, on reviewing the occurrences of a certain day, exclaimed, "*Diem perdidi*," meaning "I have lost a day!" A consciousness that he had not performed a single good deed, during the hours that made up that day, caused the exclamation. That was certainly a sufficient reason for the feeling to which it gave utterance. It would be sufficient reason for persons holding far less influential positions than an Emperor's. We were about to add, "and therefore less responsible." But we do not know that the responsibility for time lost, which attaches to us all, can be lessened or increased, strictly speaking, by our position. Certainly, in a primary sense, it cannot be—for we have each our duties to perform. These each day brings with it. They are our *individual* duties. Nobody else can perform them for us. We need not specify what these duties are. Suffice it to say that they may be summed up in the very converse of the self-confession of the Emperor—"I have *not* lost this day! I am conscious of having used its precious minutes in deeds of usefulness; and I have reason to believe that the world is the better for my having lived twenty-four hours longer!"

Here we have the true rule:—the use of our time to the best possible advantage, so as to perform each the duties of his own earthly mission, in his own sphere, to the best of his abilities and opportunities. If all would study and practice this rule, there would be no need of the confession, "I have lost a day!" And a solemn consideration that is, when we come to reflect upon its consequences. Truly said the proverb "time and tide wait for no man." And, since every day brings its own work, there is no way in which our "lost days" can be reclaimed! *

Let us see to it, then, that the records of Eternity shall not roll up against us such an account of losses of time, as shall make us realize, most fearfully, the import of "*Diem perdidi!*"

THE FLOWERY MONTH.

Never looked the country more lovely than in the flowery month just past. June breathed her delicious spirit over the fields and woods, over shrub and blossom, and wherever man was not ruder than insensate nature, there was bloom and odor, and, to all appreciative beholders, an exquisite joy. The strawberries ripe and luscious on the vines, the peas, in white and purple blossom, the grapes putting forth their clusters, and on every hand the rich life of bounteous nature springing from the bosom of mother earth, around whose cradle, couch, and grave, birds never cease to sing, nor winds to sigh. And, O, the smell of the new-mown hay; the flaky foam of the brimming milk-pails; the lounge in nodding clover, and the merry voices of children—our human crickets—chirruping from "morn till dewy eve." Such are the tokens of nature in June—tokens visible out in the country, but untranslateable and indescribable, save in the emotional language of the soul.

No Travelling Agents.—We employ no travelling agents. If any party pretends hereafter to act as such you can put him down as a swindler. The best way to get our paper is at the book and periodical stores; but if you happen not to be within reach of one, then you can send us two dollars, and we will mail it to you.

LANDOCRACY.

With some of our society tinkers, landocracy is the cause of many of the evils that afflict the human race, while its abolition is to be the revivifyer of human industry wherever it has slackened, and the creator of it where it does not exist. It cannot be disputed that lands have been in portions of the earth unequally parcelled out, and unjustly withheld from the masses of the people, but the impossibility of obtaining earth to till, has never necessarily kept a people in bondage or pauperism. Landocracy, beyond man's having what he can honestly and usefully cultivate, is a bad thing, and exists too largely; but if the whole earth were divided into ten or twenty acre lots, all equally fertile, but unimproved, human misery would not cease, nor would the world be rid of idlers and grumblers.

A certain proportion of mankind will not earn their living by the practice of industry and its relative virtues. They prefer the precarious subsistence afforded by the exercise of low wits, or derived from charity. They scorn self-reliance. It is their disposition and creed to trust Providence altogether, and the result is a scaly measure of provender, in the main. A plenty of this class are all around us. The earth is broad before them—millions of acres of unoccupied and unclaimed land, which somebody must dig and harrow before it can be settled, invites them, but they will have nothing to do with it. They are landless, and mean to be so, until they can get, money and labor free, somebody's already cultivated farms.

How many of the landless of this city, do our society tinkers suppose, would go and settle the wild public lands, on condition of earning their living therefrom? Not one in ten of active "land-reformers" in our cities—being chiefly mechanics and artizans—would accept the public lands on such a condition. It is a fine "catch" to raise a hue and cry over, and to justify indolence and unthrift in other pursuits. In this country, at least, those who are born with a disposition to till land, will find it, by hook or by crook. It isn't so difficult to get land as it is to get it tilled. People cry after it, who would cry louder if set to grub their bread therefrom. It is a good hobby to charge all the evils of the working classes to, and a better hobby for politicians to ride, but it would be a bad horse to hold a plough behind. A pill compounded of improved disposition for industry, intelligence, economy, temperance, and perseverance, would, taken generally, soon purge away whatever the landless have to complain of—which is more than the abolition of all the landocracies will ever do.

THE GOOD OF IT.

What's the good, say some, of all this music, painting and sculpture, cultivated at home or imported from abroad? What does it signify, beyond filling the heads of the people with luxurious and extravagant ideas, unfitting them for the more earnest, practical, and profitable things of life? Such is the argument of many who hold the refining processes of society in supreme contempt. We might answer what's the good, by demonstrating that wherever the finer arts, graces and muses have lent no refinement and polish, the people have been savage or barbarous. The more the human mind comes in contact with the exalted and beautiful, the less it delights in the gross, the low, and the deformed. It takes hue and spirit from its surroundings, and the more nobly and sublimely they teach the lesson of truth—which alone is great and final—the less men follow wicked and depraving ideas, and the less they war and wrangle like brutes.

That is the truest civilizer which most subdues the baser passions of man; which most exalts his soul with higher thoughts, and fills his heart with purer aspirations. The savage, gazing upon the canvas of Zeuxis, or upon the Phidian Jove smiling in marble majesty, or listening to the "Gregorian Chaunt," could but feel that man has a nobler than the fighting capacity, and a mission higher than to scourge the earth with slaughter and ruin. If music could soften the natures of furious beasts, and the lion be entranced with Lydian or Dorian airs, shall man own no god-like presence in the language which embodies our brightest visions of Eden-land? Not a tender or thrilling strain of music vibrates upon the ear without leaving a blessing, and no beautiful thing can exist in art without enriching the soul of man. The good of music, painting, sculpture and poetry, is vast, and to these much of the glory of civilization belongs.

INDUSTRY.

To industry, guided by reasonable intelligence and economy, every people can look with certainty as an unfailing source of temporal prosperity. Especially can a people like ours rely upon such industry, in the various pursuits answering to their common wants and necessities, and far better will be the conquest, and richer the trophy won by honest, unpretending industry than was ever reaped by the sword. Industry involves no tumult nor disorder. Inspired by peace, it is the perpetuator of peace, harmony, and happiness in society, blessing the individual, and lending strength and greatness to the State. In all ages, the crown of exaltation should have been given to peaceful industry, which, alone, in humble or in lofty pursuits and enterprises, has promoted the better interests of mankind. Had it been so, instead of giving to war and feud the huzza and eclat—making the man-slayer more honorable than the man-server—history would not now bear black and bloody stains on all its pages, and humanity have to mourn over the bondage and debasement of races. Whatever is useful or beautiful in art, science, or other human attainment, has come from industry. In the humblest pursuits, industry may be accompanied by the noblest intelligence, so that respect, place and power are open to its humblest honest practicer. Let no man spurn industry as his temporal shield; it is the safest and surest he can buckle to his arm, and with it he may defy the want and poverty which, more than everything else, destroy the independence of man.

WHAT BRIDE CAKE CAN DO.

"With the marriage notice of the majestic Colonel ———, and the lovely Miss ———," says a Western editor, "we received a slice of delicious Bride's Cake, icebound in rolling folds of whiteness, emblamatic of the purity of the gentle bride. May their lives be one long, long dream of happiness, strewed with flowers of love and affection, and when it ends, may they bloom together on the Rose Tree of Eternal Life, is our fond prayer."

That shows what emotions of gratitude "a slice of delicious Bride's Cake" can awaken in the bosom of an editorial stomach unused to such delicacies. His enthusiasm will not permit him to print the delicious substantive without capital letters, although with most people bride's cake is quite a common noun. The "*Rose Tree* of Eternal Life," is quite a novel idea; and so is that of a married couple "blossoming" on it. Perhaps, however, our cake-fed editor is a satirist, and slily introduced the rose-tree for the purpose of suggesting conjugal thorns.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

PEEPS AT PHILADELPHIA.

NUMBER THREE.

Always an *if!* *If* the Philadelphians would not barricade their pretty houses with those ugly wooden-outside-shutters, with those ugly iron hinges. I am sure my gypsy breath would draw hard behind one. And *if* the Philadelphians would not build such garrison-like walls about their beautiful gardens. Why not allow the passer-by to view what would give so much pleasure? certainly, we would hope, without abstracting any from the proprietors. Clinton avenue, as well as other streets in Brooklyn, is a beautiful example of this. Light, low iron railings about the well-kept lawns and gardens—sunset groups of families upon piazzas, and, oh—prettier yet—little dhildren darting about like butterflies among the flowers. I missed this in Philadelphia. The balmy air of evening seemed only the signal for barring up each family securely within those jail-like shutters; behind which, I am sure, beat hearts as warm and friendly as any stranger could wish to meet. I must say I feel grateful to any householder who philanthropically refreshes the *public* eye with the vines and flowers he has wreathed about his home. I feel grateful to any woman I meet, who rests my rainbow-sated eye by a modest, tasteful costume. I thank every well-made man who passes me, with well-knit limbs and expanded chest, encased in nice linen, and a coat he can breathe in; yes—why not? Do you purse up your mouth at this? do you say it was not *proper* for me to have said this? I hate the word proper. If you tell me a thing is not proper, I immediately feel the most rabid desire to go "neck and heels" into it. Proper! it is a fence behind which indelicacy is found hidden much oftener than in the open highway. Out upon proper! So I say again, I like to see a well-made man—made—not by the tailor—but by the Almighty. I glory in his luxuriant beard; in his firm step; in his deep, rich voice; in his bright, falcon eye. I thank him for being handsome, and letting me see him. We all yearn for the beautiful; the little child, who drew its first breath in a miserable cellar, and has known no better home, has yet its cracked mug or pitcher, with the treasured dandelion or clover blossoms. Be generous, ye householders, who have the means to gratify a taste to which God himself ministers, and hoard not your gardens and flowers for the pallid eye of satiety. Let the little child, who, God knows, has few flowers enough in its earthly pathway, peep through the railing, and, if for only a moment, dream of paradise.

The Philadelphia Opera House, which I am told is a very fine one, I did not see, as I intended, as also many institutions which I hope yet to visit, when I can make a longer stay. Of one of the principal theatres I will say, that she must be a courageous woman who would dare to lean back against its poisonously dirty cushions. Ten minutes sufficed me to breathe an atmosphere that would have disgraced the "Five Points;" and to listen to tragic howlings only equalled in the drunken brawls of that locality. Upon my exit, I looked with new surprise upon the first pair of immaculate marble steps I encountered, and putting this and that together, gave up the vexed problem. New York streets may be dirty, but our places of amusement are clean.

At one public institution I visited, we were shown about by the most dignified and respectable of grey-haired old men; so much so, that I felt serious compunctions lest I should give trouble by asking questions which agitated my very inquiring mind. Bowing an adieu to him, with the reverence with which his appearance had inspired me, we were about to pass down the principal stairs to the main entrance, when he touched the gentleman who accompanied me on the shoulder, and said in an undertone, not intended for my ears, "Please don't offer me money, sir, *in the presence of any one!*" A minute after he had pocketed, with a bow, the neatly-extracted coin, (which *I* should as soon have thought of offering to General Washington,) and with a parting touch of his warning forefinger to his lip, intended for my companion, we found ourselves outside the building, doing justice to his generalship by explosive bursts of laughter. So finished was the performance, that we admiringly agreed to withhold the name of the venerable perpetrator.

We found the very best accommodations at the hotel where we were located, both as to the fare and attendance. I sent a dress to the laundry-room for a little re-touching, rendered necessary by my ride the day before. On ringing for its return, the summons was answered by a grenadier-looking fellow, with a world of whisker, who, as I opened the door, stood holding the gauzy nondescript at arm's length, between his thumb and finger, as he inquired of me, "Is this the item, Mem?" *Item!* Had he searched the dictionary through, he could not have better hit it—or me. I have felt a contempt for the dress ever since.

Having had the misfortune to set the pitcher in my room down upon vacancy, instead of upon the wash-stand, and the natural consequence thereof being a crash and a flood, I reported the same, lest the chambermaid should suffer for my careless act. Of course, I found it charged in my bill, as I had intended, but with it the whole cost of the set to which it belonged! It never struck me, till I got home, that by right of proprietorship, I might have indulged in the little luxury of smashing the remainder—which I think of taking a special journey to Philadelphia to do! Fanny Fern

STOLEN PLEASURES.

What is the fleeting pleasure of a day,
That we to taste so dear a joy should seek;
But as a red rose stolen from the May,
And fastened by its thorns to winter's cheek!

Ah, talk of such delights no more, no more!
I saw a lost soul once, and this I know;
Better to brave the rough rocks of the shore,
Than step upon the lying waves below.

Alice Cary.

BE FRANK AND DETERMINED.

Never affect to be other than what you are—either richer, or wiser, or braver. Learn to say, "I do not know," and "I cannot afford it," with most sonorous distinctness and emphasis. Men will then believe you, when you say "I *do* know," and "I *can* afford it." Never be ashamed to pass for just what you really are, and try *to be* as worthy as possible. Once establish yourself and your mode of life as what they truly are, and you are on solid ground. A man is already of consequence in the world, when it is known that we can implicitly rely on him—that when he says he knows a thing, he knows it; and when he says he will do a thing, he will do it. Such a reputation will give a man more real enjoyment, and is of far greater value to him, than all the results which display and pretension can compass.

THE CREDIT SYSTEM.

"Owe no man anything," was the injunction of a Christian Apostle. If we were to express the sentiment, we should prefer the motto of John Randolph, "Pay as you go," because it is more explicit. Owe men we must, in all the courtesies and kindnesses which belong to and grace humanity; it is a debt collateral with our being—an obligation of our nature—therefore the Apostle was not definite enough, (not that he was at fault, but rather the translator,) but Randolph hit the mark when he confined his maxim to debts pecuniary, which men, under the present order of things, are liable to incur. He touched with a healthy philosophy one of the greatest and commonest of society evils.

We take it for granted that, as a general rule, debts pecuniary are contracted to be paid, sooner or later. As a general rule, their burthen is least the sooner they are paid. Interest, usury, dependence, law-suits and costs of many kinds, that hang over standing and litigated debts, add if we could but get at their total in this country for a single year, millions of dollars to the original obligations. Friendships are broken over debts; forgeries and murders are committed on their account; and, however considered, they are a source of cost and annoyance—and that continually. They break in everywhere upon the harmonious relations of men; they render men servile or tyrannous, as they chance to be debtors or creditors; they blunt sensitiveness to personal independence, and, in no respect that we can fathom, do they advance the general well-being. The rich have no excuse for not paying as they go, and the poor depend upon the payments of the rich to make their own ends meet. It is a shameful fact of the credit system, that the rich presume upon credit, and abuse it far more than the poor. Blessed will be the day when all men pay as they go.

NEWTON'S CONFESSION.

Sir Isaac Newton made a confession, which the young might be excused for accepting as the voice of mock-modesty, did not the rare truthfulness which history has ascribed to the discoverer of Gravitation, forbid such a suspicion. We allude to his declaration, after the contemporaneous world of science was content to own him as its teacher, that he felt as though he had only gathered a few pebbles on the shore, while the great ocean of knowledge lay outstretched before him!

The experience of the Newtons of the world, is the experience of all its searchers after knowledge. The young, with the mere "pebbles" which they have gathered from the rivulets of academical text-books and collegiate lectures, walk forth as self-confidently, not to say as vauntingly, as one would be entitled to do, who had dived to the depths of the very ocean, and brought up its hidden treasures. But the very first contact with the actual world serves to dissipate the delusions of the ideal. By degrees, they come to realise the difficulties before them, and to perceive that no school or college can furnish more than merely the *beginning* of knowledge. The older they grow, if they continue studying, the more deficient they feel themselves to be. When early manhood, with its cares, is once upon them, the remembrance of early opportunities neglected will begin to accuse them. A semi-consciousnes of *how much* neglect has cost them, will then steal upon them. The *full* sense of the utter pebbliness of their knowledge, such as haunted the great astronomer, will be reserved for a still later experience. But they will be sure to realise it, sooner or later in their lives.

What a volume of hints, young man, is given to you by the confession of Newton!

RELIGION AND SCIENCE.

Some people seem to be constantly in dread of conflicts of Science with Religion. This is an unfounded and foolish fear. The expositor of religious truth, if he understands his mission, always accepts the deductions of positive science, thankfully, and turns them to account, as illustrations of his spiritual teachings. This was the habit of the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles of the New. It was not their mission to correct the scientific theories of their times—much less to become philosophical teachers. They accepted the theories in vogue, and employed them, as it became necessary, for the inculcation of the ethical truths which it *was* their business to proclaim.

Those who take so much pleasure in assailing the Bible with the carping weapons of Infidelity should understand this, in order to do justice to the personal agencies concerned in its production. But they do *not* understand it, and hence the unfairness of so many of their assaults upon the "Book of books."

Such a religion as that presented by Christianity is in harmony with universal truth. It cannot be otherwise, when fairly expounded. The science of the earth will confirm it; that of the starry heavens will furnish it sublime illustrations, while the science of the mind will point out the wants which it stands ready to supply—the diseases which its balm is intended to heal.

Let there, then, be no thought of conflicts between Religion and science. They are one in origin, and one in aim. The consequence of their prevalence will be the onward and upward progress of the race in wisdom, glory, and happiness.

THE WORLD'S KILLED AND WOUNDED.

All the people ever slain in war, since the world began, including the wounded and they who have perished by famine and suffering directly traceable to war, would not make a respectable population for the Globe for one generation. Why, therefore, should whiners make such a fuss about the "*destruction* and *horrors* of war!"—*Oswegatchie Courier.*

Our cotemporary is as far out of the way in his statistics as he is in his humanity. Reliable authorities state that over nine hundred and eighty millions of lives have been lost in battle, within the last four thousand years, and that there have died from famine, wounds and suffering occasioned by war, over three thousand nine hundred and forty millions (3,940,000,000) of human beings. These two numbers added together make the appalling sum of four thousand nine hundred and twenty millions (4,920,000,000) of human lives sacrificed to the inexorable spirit of havoc, which is equal to six times the entire present population of the globe.

A Paragraph for the Unfaithful.—One of the most painful feelings the heart can know, is to learn the unworthiness of a person who has hitherto shared our good opinion and protection; we are at once mortified at our mistaken judgment, and wounded in our affections.

Rejection of Great Truths.—People frequently reject great truths, not so much for want of evidence, as for want of an inclination to search for it.

Respect.—We are never so jealous of the respect of others as when we have forfeited our own.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

A **spoiled** child is an unfortunate victim, who proves the weakness of his parents' judgment much more forcibly than the strength of their affection. It is the just punishment of a weak over-indulgency that, the more we fondle a spoiled child, the more completely we alienate him from us, as an arrow flies the farther from us, the closer we draw it to our bosom.

By a modern improvement, steam-engines are made to swallow their own smoke. We wonder if this improvement, or some similar one, could not be applied to the cigar-smokers in our streets. Smoking, however, has at least one advantage—it entices fools to be silent, or only to talk smoke, which is, at the worst, an inaudible annoyance.

In all emergencies men of prompt action rather than of curious speculation are demanded. We have heard of men of science who, when a house was on fire, would stand calmly before it, arguing whether the better way to extinguish the flames was by a siphon or by capillary attraction.

If a letter were to be addressed to that very influential word, "Circumstances," concluding thus, "I am, sir, your very obedient, humble servant," the greater part of the world might subscribe it without the slightest departure from the truth.

It is said that the belles of Paris have adopted the fashion of wearing gold-hilted daggers upon public occasions. Evidently they have a design upon the *hearts* of their male acquaintances. The Parisian Cupid has thrown aside his bow and arrows and taken to the stiletto.

Undoubtedly we should be much better men than we are if we pardoned the mistakes of others as freely as if we ourselves were constantly committing the same faults, and yet avoided their errors as scrupulously as if we never forgave them.

The aggregate weight of a late jury of twelve men in Indiana was stated to be 2,832 pounds. Just think of a poor fellow's being tried by 2,832 pounds avoirdupois of jury. It would seem fitter that the jury itself should be tried by the tallow-chandler.

Brigham Young, in a recent sermon, told the Mormons that it was "more important to raise saints than to raise crops." No doubt he thinks it the more agreeable husbandry of the two.

A **contemporary** wants to know in what age women have been held in the highest esteem. We don't know. But certainly fashionable ladies fill a larger space in the world now than they ever did before.

A **lady** who could not conceal even from herself the plainness of her face boasted that her back was perfect. "That is the reason, I suppose, that your friends are always glad to see it," said one of her listeners.

Dr. Johnson designated a club as "an assembly of good fellows, meeting under circumstances." The definition wouldn't be applicable in all cases now-a-days, without the insertion of the words "for nothing," after "good."

There is no music sweeter to our ears than the first peeping of the frogs in the early spring-time. We never listen to them without heartily wishing them a safe deliverance from all mischievous boys and hungry Frenchmen.

In Texas, a man, stone-blind, is said to have been appointed to the Bench. He may make an excellent judge. Still, the fact that justice is blind, is hardly a good reason why her ministers should be so too.

A **small** Indiana editor assails us in a bitter article as a contributor to the New York Ledger. We don't think his article will attract anybody's notice. Like the liquor that seems to have inspired it, it is *still* born.

A **man** in the interior of Kentucky has brought suit against his neighbor for bruising his shins. If the jury award damages they should order the amount to be paid in shin-plasters.

A **Richmond** paper says that "the moon has been rising for some nights with a face as red as a toper's." No imputation ought to be cast upon Cynthia's sobriety. She fills her horn only once a month.

We have heard of men celebrating their country's battles, who, in war, were celebrated for keeping out of them.

To send a challenge is, in effect, to call upon a man who may have stabbed your reputation to satisfy you for the injury by treating your body in the same manner.

A **Paris** journal says that "France appears to be in the way of the United States." If she is, she is certainly in a much better way than she ever was before.

A **Tennessee** editor says that a certain politician's face indicates deep thought and learning. We wonder if he can mean that it is *deeply red*.

We presume it will not be denied that he is a bad agent, who, instead of doing the business of his employer, does *him*.

A **rhymer** sends us some of his verses, and describes himself as six feet four inches high. In spite of his height, he is no *Longfellow*.

Some persons are more impatient of successes than others are of reverses. By basking in the sunshine of fortune they become sour and turn to vinegar.

A **Compliment** is a thing most frequently paid by who never pay anything else.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A **Mrs. Jenner**, who lives on the Eastern shore of Maryland, on putting her sleeping infant in her bed a short time since, felt something cold touch her hand as she laid the child down, and on instituting an examination, she discovered, to her great horror, a large snake coiled under the blanket. Her cries soon brought Mr. Jenner to the spot, and the serpent was killed.

A **few** days since, three boys, about twelve years old, got into a promiscuous fight, in Water street. Two of them clinched and fell upon the pavement, when the third commenced kicking them in the face. Having on heavy boots, he injured them dreadfully, breaking the jaw of one and putting out the left eye of the other.

A **few** nights ago, a number of women who infested a low haunt in Duane street got into a fight about the division of a bottle of brandy, when, after much scratching of faces and tearing of apparel, the bottle-holder struck one of her companions on the temple with the bottle and injured her so severely it is supposed she cannot recover.

A **handsome** young lady, the daughter of an opulent merchant of this city, attempted to drown herself in the Harlem river a few days ago, but was prevented by some gentlemen who saw her plunge in, and who sprang to her rescue. The reason assigned for her conduct was—disappointment in love.

A **horrid** murder was perpetrated, a short time ago, in Constantinople, by a Grecian slave-girl. Stung to madness by repeated acts of tyranny on the part of her master, she watched her opportunity, and when he was asleep cut his throat from ear to ear, and then dug his heart from his bosom.

A **boy** named George Eldridge, the only son of a widow living in Iowa, was recently attacked by a bear as he was going to the spring (some ten rods from the house) for water, his ribs crushed in by the animal's hug, and the flesh torn from his face and breast, before the distracted mother could get assistance to kill the monster.

A **gang** of horse-thieves having infested a county in Iowa, until the inhabitants were driven to madness by their losses, they recently formed a company to hunt down the depredators. Four of the thieves were caught, one of whom was hung, and the others shot on the spot. Since that day, live horse-flesh is not molested in that part of Iowa

A **Paris** paper announces that Professor Faraday, the celebrated chemist, has discovered a method of producing a beautiful electrical light which can be made available for illuminating purposes. We hope this report will prove true, for our gas bills are enormous.

A **boy** some fourteen years of age, named Wilkinson, living in Clinton county, (N. Y.,) while climbing a tall maple tree to possess himself of a bird's nest, slipped, fell to the ground, and broke his arms and back. After lingering in great agony for a few hours, he died.

A **woman** named Jarvis, living in First Avenue, spread several pieces of bread with butter and arsenic, for the purpose of destroying rats and mice; but, unfortunately, one of her children, a little girl four years of age, got hold of a piece and eat it, which caused her death in a few hours.

It has been discovered that the Bunker Hill Monument is higher at sunset than at sunrise. The sunbeams enter the pores of the stones like so many little wedges, lifting it up.

Seventy bags of new wheat were recently sold in St. Louis at $2 10 a bushel—rather a high figure we should think.

It is estimated that in the Sub-Treasury and Banks of this city, there is now over twelve million dollars in specie.

WRITTEN IN SORROW.

BY ALICE CARY.

Uncomforting my muse to-night
 Seems down upon her lyre,
While con-cience kindles to a flame
 Its everliving fire.

Well, let it burn, and burn and burn,
 To that tormenting glow
That melts the dross of sin, and leaves
 The grains of good below.

For if my soul have not the gift
 Of endless life in vain,
'Twill grow in strength through suffering,
 And weary out this pain.

And when my mood of misery
 Is grieved in tears away,
And sunshine beats the wintry frosts
 Into the leaves of May;

The smallest star that keeps in heaven
 Its golden candle bright,
An insect singing in the grass,
 Shall fill me with delight.

THE ISLAND PRINCESS.

A ROMANCE OF THE OLD AND NEW WORLD.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "The Lost Heiress," "The Deserted Wife," "The Missing Bride," "Retribution," etc.

Entered according to Act of Congress, inthe year 1857, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE RECLUSE.

"Oh! might I here
In solitude live hidden—in some glade
Obscure, where highest woods impenetrable
To star or sunlight, spread their umbrage broad
And dark as evening. Cover me ye pines,
Ye cedars with innumerable boughs
Hide me where they may never find me more."
MILTON.

We left Estelle and her attendant on the lonely beach below the Headland, with the night coming on.

They looked about themselves.

At their feet lay the baggage, with no one near to take it away. Above their heads arose the steep cedar-grown bank, with no visible path up its ascent.

Westward rolled the infinite sea, now fast darkening under the evening sky.

Eastward stretched the impenetrable forest, falling into deeper gloom under the lowering shadows of night.

From the sombre and solitary scene they turned to look into each other's faces.

"Blessed saints, my lady! what a savage coast! does any living thing inhabit it, do you think?" asked Susan, with a shudder.

"Why, certainly, you know it, my girl."

"Beg your pardon, dear lady, but indeed no, I don't know it! I'm afraid the captain has put us ashore at the wrong place; and I, for my part, feel as if we were cast upon some desert island."

"But did you not see the house from the ship?"

"Yes, my lady; but now I think of it, that makes the matter more frightful! for it must have been a bewitched house, and we must be on enchanted ground, else what's become of it? I don't see so much as a chimney of it!"

"Because we are below the line of vision, being too close under the bank. The house is up on the Headland, back among the trees."

"Then how shall I break a path for you, dear lady? for you çan never get through these briars!"

"There is a path broken, and well worn, of course. And there is an aged couple of servants somewhere near here, who, Miss Brande informed me, had the keys, and would show us up to the house, and open it for us. The path to their cabin starts from this landing, she said. Let us look for it, Susan."

"Holy saints, my lady, the sky is growing so dark that I could not see a conflagration?" said the girl, peering closely to the ground—"And the grass is so thickly strewn with fallen leaves, that ——"

"Sarvint, Mist'ess?" uttered a gentle, growling sort of voice from the bushes near her.

"Ah-h-h!!" yelled the maid—"Sweet Providence, what is that! We shall be murdered by this savage," and frantic with terror, she ran towards her mistress.

Estelle laid her hand soothingly upon the girl's shoulder, and turned to see what the cause of the alarm might be.

It was the gentle-hearted old negro, Neptune, who now emerged from the bushes, and came into full view. And if the terrible sea-god himself had risen from the waters, sceptre in hand, he could not have stricken greater terror to the heart of the simple English maiden! And, in truth, the mistress also gazed upon the apparition in some doubt, as well she might, for the good old man was rather an awful looking object.

His form was tall, gaunt, and bent beneath the weight of an hundred winters. His face was black, hard, shining, and seamed with wrinkles as a dried prune, and framed around with snow-white hair and beard in spectral contrast to its blackness. A suit of duck, seeming almost as old and weather-worn as himself, and a tattered blanket, pinned with a thorn around his neck, and hanging in ragged folds about his figure; a black tarpaulin hat, with a red handkerchief passed over the crown and round under his chin; and shoes of undressed leather, completed his strange and picturesque attire.

In his hand he carried a rugged, unhewn club, upon which he leaned in walking.

On approaching the strangers, he pulled the hat and handkerchief from his head, and holding them, came on, bowing and bowing, as in deprecation of their displeasure for the fright he had unconsciously given.

The maid shrank away, but the mistress went forward to meet him.

"Sarvint, Mist'ess," once more said the old man, bowing very humbly, and then standing hat in hand before the lady.

"Good evening. You are Miss Brande's servant?"

"Yes, Mist'ess."

"She has let me her house. She referred me to you for the keys. We have just arrived to take possession. Will you, therefore, be so good as to get the keys, and show us the way thither," said the lady.

Now, this event was so unexpected, that it took some time to make its way into the slow and unprepared brain of the old negro. He found nothing to say or do, but only stood bowing and bowing. Lady Montressor repeated her directions.

But the old man, "still far wide," only answered by another deep obeisance, and the pointless words—

"Yes, Mist'ess—'deed it are!"

Lady Montressor glanced hopelessly around towards Susan, who stood peeping over her Mistress's shoulder, and whose fears had disappeared before the gentle, deprecating manners of the black.

"Why, what an old jelly brain!" she exclaimed, impatiently, coming forward and confronting the old man.

"Yes, honey, jes' so," replied the latter, bowing to her, and in no degree disturbed by the rudeness of her words.

"Chut! can't you understand, you antique idiot, that my mistress has rented the house from Miss Brande, and that she wants to get into it?" asked Susan, angrily.

"'Cisely so, honey. When's Miss Barbara spected home?" asked the old creature, mildly.

Susan lost the last remnant of her patience.

"Look here, ancient simpleton, we are tired of standing here! Where are the keys?" she peremptorily demanded.

The curtness of her tone brought the old man at last to a point.

"There aint but one key—de front door key; I carries it about with me. 'Cisely so, Mist'ess—here it are," he said, producing a huge, old-fashioned iron key, that might have sufficed for a prison lock.

"Well, now, go on before us, and open the door," commanded Susan.

"Yes, Mist'ess; zactly so, chile," was the meek reply, as the old man, advancing his stick, groped along and struck into the narrow hidden path, leading up the ascent of the Headland.

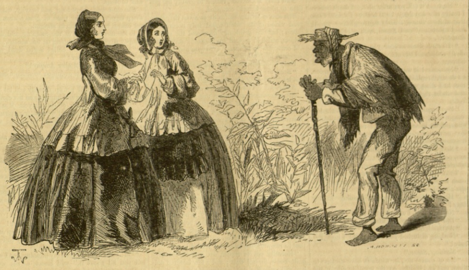
"But, stop! will the baggage be safe here?" inquired Susan.

"'Cisely so, honey. Dere's nothin' to 'sturb it," said Uncle Neptune.

"Dear lady, please take hold of my arm; the path is very steep, and slippery with the fallen leaves," said the maid.

It was now quite dark.

Lady Montressor availed herself of the proffered assistance and in a few minutes they reached the top of the Headland, and stood upon a level with the ancient trees and the old house, half hidden among them, and dimly perceived through the darkness. Uncle Neptune going before, went up the steps and unlocked the door.



THE APPARITION OF OLD NEPTUNE.

"Take care, my lady, for the love of mercy! there is not a plank fast on these ricketty stairs," said Susan, anxiously guiding her delicate lady's steps up into the dilapidated portico.

Old Neptune was within side the door, hammering at something that he held in his hand, and with which he presently struck a light, by means of which they saw the whole length of the old-fashioned hall; and beside the front door a tiny cupboard, from which the old man had produced a tinder-box and a candle.

"Dis way, Mist'ess. 'Cisely so! Dis is the bes' parlor," he said, opening the door on the right, and admitting them into a large, scantily-furnished room.

The single tallow candle made the darkness here so terribly "visible," that the old man, after standing it upon the solitary table, and dragging forward two rush-bottom chairs for the strangers, hurried out to the little cupboard, and brought three or four more candles, which he lighted, and set in a row on the mantel-piece.

With this extra illumination, Susan looked critically around upon "the best parlor." The vast dreary room had one great merit—immaculate cleanliness. The bare walls were white, the bare floor was pure. One oak table stood between the two front windows, and upon it sat the model of a frigate, under full sail—the work of Willful Brande; at equal distances around the room were ranged a half-dozen rush-bottom chairs; the wide fire-place was filled with fresh cedar boughs; on the mantel-piece were several rare sea-shells, an empty ostrich egg, a whale's tooth, a fragment of the old "Constitution," sprays of coral, lumps of amber, and other articles collected by Captain Brande during his numerous voyages. That was all.

Though this was but the tenth of October, the night was very chilly, and the large room really cold.

"Would you like a fire, Mist'ess?" asked Uncle Neptune.

"Yes! certainly, yes! What are you thinking of? Ugh! I believe we had as well gone to Lapland," exclaimed Susan.

The old man took the mass of evergreens from the chimney, carried them out, and soon returned with an armfull of brush, with which he proceeded to light a fire. As the cheerful blaze crackled and ran up the chimney, diffusing light and warmth throughout the room, Susan rubbed her hands, congratulated her mistress, and set a chair near the fire for her accommodation.

"Now then, old father! you *are* a nice old man, on a longer acquaintance—how shall we get our baggage to the house?" inquired the girl.

"Hem-m—Jes so, chile. Me and my ole 'oman and Sam kin fetch it."

"Sam?"

"'Cisely so, honey—Island Sam, as is on a wisit to us."

"Some acquaintance of yours, I suppose. Very well, my good old father! go and attend to it, and you shall be well paid for your trouble."

"Zactly so, honey," replied the poor old fellow, bowing himself out.

When the door closed behind him, Susan took off her bonnet and shawl, put them on a chair and approached her mistress, who, during these few minutes, had been sitting before the fire, in a mood of deep abstraction.

"Come, Madam, permit me to relieve you of these," she said, gently and respectfully, as she untied the ribbons and removed her lady's bonnet, and unbuttoned and took off her mantle.

Lady Montressor suffered her to proceed, and then drew a deep inspiration.

"Don't sigh, dear lady!" said Susan, mistaking the cause of her mistress's pensiveness—"the old barn is, after all, not so bad. Means will make it very comfortable, and even now it is perfectly clean."

"Sit down, and cease to trouble yourself, child. The house does very well," said Lady Montressor.

Susan obeyed, and was very still for about fifteen minutes, at the end of which the footsteps of the men bearing the baggage were heard approaching.

She hurried out to meet them. The trunks were brought in, and placed for the present in the hall, and the men went back to bring the hampers.

But the old woman who had accompanied them, came into the parlor to offer her services to the lady. Going up to her, she stood and courtesied, with the customary—

"Sarvint, Mist'ess."

Lady Montressor lifted her languid eyes to look at this new-comer.

She was a little, old, dried up, jet black negro, looking as though she had grown hard and strong with age. She was dressed in a bright plaid linsey petticoat, with a blue cotton short gown, and a check handkerchief tied over her head.

"Sarvint, Mist'ess," she repeated; "kin I be of any sarvice?"

"Who are you, my good woman?" asked Lady Montressor, gently.

"My name's Aunt Amphy, honey, 'deed it is, child—Aunt Amphy. I's be-known to all the country roun', for a 'spectable, 'sponsible, age-able, ole 'oman, as knows how to 'duct herself proper'—and as any lady may put conference in. 'Deed is *I*, honey."

"I do not doubt it," said Lady Montressor, contemplating this original with a good deal of curiosity—"you said your name was——"

"Aunt Amphy, child! 'deed it is! least ways that's what they do call me, aldough de name give me by my sponsors in Babtism wer Amphitryte, arter the Queen of the Ocean."

"Yes! well, can I do anything for you, Amphy?"

"Lor bless you, no, child! no honey! not a singley thing! I's independent, thanks be to my 'Vine Marster. I come to see if I could be of any sarvice to you, child, in showing of you the house and furniter—seeing how you've rented of it jes as it stands—and if I could make de beds, or get supper ready for you or anything."

"I thank you; you are very kind. I accept your services and will reward them; there is my maid; you can consult and assist her. Susan, come hither, my girl."

Susan came forward.

"Here is this good woman, Amphy, who will show you through the house and render you any assistance you may need."

"Yes, child—'deed will *I*," put in the woman.

"Very well! come along then! and show me where the kitchen is, first of all," said Susan.

"Yes, honey—keep close arter me. And don't you be 'fraid now! if de house is haunted," said Amphy.

There was not far to go. Amphy simply crossed the hall, and opening the opposite door on the left hand side, ushered her companion into the room used as a kitchen;—such a poor place! so clean—yet so bare of furniture; a wide fire-place with iron fire-dogs, and surmounted by a mantle-piece upon which stood a row of brass candlesticks, a corner cupboard—the upper part with glass doors—containing common white delf ware, a wooden table and four wooden chairs, were all the visible articles of furniture.

"Dar honey! What do you say to *dat* for a 'spectable kitchen?" exclaimed the old woman in triumph.

"Where are the cooking utensils?" asked Susan, eluding the other's question.

"The *which*, honey?"

"The tea-kettle, and saucepan and toasting-fork, and so on."

"Oh! yes, child! surely! Dey's in de bottom o' de cupboard."

"Now then if you will show me where to get some wood and water, I will have the fire made and the kettle on by the time the hampers arrive."

"I'll go get de wood and water, child—you jes go and wait to onpack de hampers."

"Very well; thank you; go."

The fire was soon kindled; the hampers were brought in and unpacked; and Susan's dexterous and willing fingers quickly prepared a light repast of black tea, toast, and two poached eggs, which she neatly arranged upon a waiter and carried in and set before her mistress.

"Now *do*, sweet lady, try to eat something," she said affectionately—"these eggs look like snow-balls; this toast is browned to a turn, and this tea—better never came from Canton!—try now while I go and see what prospect there is for comfortable sleeping."

And leaving the sad-browed lady, she called Amphy from the hall, and directed her to show the way to the best chamber.

The old woman merely opened the door connecting the parlor in which they stood with the back room and said—

"Dar! Dat Miss Barbara's own sleepin' room, and its de bes' in de house."

It was as bare and as clean as the other apartments. An open fireplace, filled with fragrant pine boughs, and flanked on either side by a linen and clothes press; a four-posted bedstead with a comfortable bed, well made up and covered with a white counterpane; a tall three-legged toilet table laid with a coarse white cloth, and furnished with a small looking-glass; a pine washstand, with a plain delf-ware basin and ewer, and two wicker chairs completed the appointments for comfort.

"This is all very clean and neat to say the least and *most* of it," remarked Susan, looking around. "But—has the room, and especially the bed, been aired lately?"

"De Lor, child! It bin aired *all de time!* De trouble *we* has is jes to keep de air *out'n* dis ole house," said Amphy.

"I believe you! But it is necessary to make up a fire and take the bed to pieces to change the sheets, for they may be damp."

"Damp! he-he-he! De Lors, honey! *ole* as de house is, dere ain't not the least bit o' damp, or must, or moulder, anywhere about it. It are so high up here, dat eberytime it rain, ebery singley bit'n de water run right off'n it! an' it so dry we kin hardly git a bit o' wegables to grow here. Damp! Lors, honey!"

"Well, I'm glad to hear it is not so; but at all events it is cold. So you take that pine out of the fireplace and kindle a fire, while I take the clothes off the bed. Where is the linen closet?"

"Dis a-one," replied Amphy, pointing out the right hand press, and then lifting the mass of pine boughs to carry them from the room.

In a short time the chamber was made comfortable. And Susan closed it up, and, accompanied by Amphy, left the room.

"Now, child, dere's another bed-room correspondin' to dis, as opens out'n de kitchen on de other side o' de hall, you know, as used to be the Captin's room, Heaven rest his soul! and which I reckon would suit you. It's clean as a penny, too, only full o' sailor's truck."

"Thank you, Mother Amphy, I shall do very well," said Susan, as they entered the parlor.

Susan went immediately to the side of Lady Montressor, whom she found with her elbow resting on the edge of the table, her head bowed upon her hand, and her face in the deep shadow of her drooping ringlets. She was sunk in profound thought, and the little refection stood almost untouched beside her.

Susan heaved a deep sigh.

"This is the way! always the way! I may prepare her the nicest little repast in the world, and she scarcely ever eats; I may make up the softest bed, and she hardly ever sleeps! and I—I wear out my life tending and watching her, to no purpose! I don't know what she lives on, I am sure, unless it is on grief and obstinacy, and she is dreadfully obstinate! If ever again I tack my fortunes on to those of a run-a-away lady—may I—— but the Lord bless her! and the Lord forsake me if ever I forsake her," thought Susan, as she silently removed the service, and beckoned Amphy to follow her from the room.

"Come into the kitchen and take a cup of tea with me, Mother Amphy. My heart is heavy, and I want somebody to talk to," said Susan, when she had closed the parlor door behind her.

"Thankee, honey, wid all de pleasure in life, since you's so 'bliging. I should 'joy a rale good cup o' tea; and I warrant de Madam keeps de werry best," said the old woman, as she followed Susan into the kitchen.

When they had drawn out the table, arranged it, and seated themselves, Amphy said—

"De lors! aint she purty dough?"

"Who?"

"De child in dere—de Madam I mean—*wonderful* purty!—but what's de matter wid her, honey? she seems to be in a heap o' trouble! Is de child a widder?"

"Hem-m! Yes, she's a widow" (*—bewitched—* there's another consequence of following a run-away lady! I shall have to lose my soul with lying, or, what is as bad, distorting the truth," thought Susan.)

"A widder! *poor* thing! she take it wonderful hard! How long she bin a widder, honey?"

"Some months."

"Dis is wonderful good tea! Some mont's! and she aint begin to git over it yet? And I spose dat what she come down to this lonesome place for?"

"Yes."

"De Lors! Well 'tis 'stonishin' how dey do take on at fust—dese young widders! but lors! it don't las long, 'specially when dey's young and handsome as *she*—and she's *wonderful* handsome! It minds me of a purty young widder as I know'd of; her husband done die of de fever. Lors! Lors! Lors! how she did take on at fust, to be sure! Nobody couldn't hold her! nobody darsent come nigh her! Byme-by she take an buy a lonesome country place, 'way off in a woody park, by itself.

"And she go dere to 'tire from de worl'; 'fuse to see any company; 'fuse to see her own dear friends; spent de live long day in walkin' up and down de locust avenue, a thinkin' on her husband in his grave. Byme-by, towards de fall, dere came back from furrin parts, a young Capt'in Lovel, who was a sort o' 'quaintance o' hern; and he sends and begs de privilege o' jes shootin' game in her woods, an' he won't come nigh de house nor 'sturb anybody. And she guv him leave; 'cause she was too sorrowful to care 'bout it, one way or t'other. So he kept roamin' through de woods, wid gun and dog, day arter day. At last he happento meet she in her solemncolly walks. Fust 'twas only a bow one side, and a sigh t'other, as dey passed each other. Next 'twas a bow one side, and a melanchollum *smile* t'other. Next it was—'Good morning, Madam,' and 'How do you do, sir?'

Arter a bit it growed 'A fine day, Madam'—'What sport have you had, sir?' 'Good, though excesssve fatiguin', Madam,' &c. 'Wont you walk in, an' res', sir?' And so de handsome Capt'in gradu'ly got to visitin' de house; till byme-by, de May followin', bless patience if dey wa'n't married! True for you, honey! I aint a tellin' of you a bit o' lie! 'Stead o'goin' down in de church *yard* with her dead husband she went into de church altar wid a live one;—and 'stead o' 'mitten' suicide she went and 'mitted matriomony! Dem's um! Ah! dat young Capt'in was a deep one! *He* know'd pretty little widders! and so do I; I knows dere ways! Dey gits over it! And so will de child in dere. You mind! if some handsome young Capt'in don't come before long to hunt *her* up—why she git tired o' stayin' and go into the world agin to hunt some young Capt'in up. Dat's all! Dar! don't you be oneasy."

"Your theory don't apply to my mistress, though, Mother Amphy. *She* is not an ordinary woman, nor are her sorrows common ones," said Susan, carried past the bounds of prudence by her indignation at the idea of her own illustrious and most unhappy lady being compared to any other "widder."

"De Lors! child has she seen any heavier trouble dan de loss of husband?"

"She lost husband, mother, father, and many relatives and friends at one fell blow! She is in mourning now for them all!"

"De 'Vine Marster in Heaben, honey! what dat you tell me!" exclaimed the old woman rolling up her eyes in horror.

"I am telling you the truth."

"Was it a shipwreck?" asked Amphy, her thoughts recurring to the Mercury.

"Worse than that, it was an earthquake."

"A YETHQUAKE—MY! Where did it happen of, honey?"

"In a land beyond the seas! Now you must know that I hate to talk about these things, Amphy. So drink your tea, that is a good soul, and let me drink mine."

"Yes, honey, yes; 'tis wonderful good tea indeed, 'specially with white sugar in it. I'se wery sorry for de chile—wery!"

"After all," thought Susan, "I might as well have given her this reason for my lady's deep mourning, and sorrow-stricken countenance, as to have her always wondering about it, and perhaps talking of it."

She then changed the conversation and inquired about the neighbors, which she discovered to be a "minus quantity" in that district; and then about the traditional ghost, that haunts every old half-ruined, country mansion, and which ought, of course, to be on duty at the Headland House, and which she found, in this instance, to be "a lady, all in white, who wandered about the house and grounds at night, weeping and wringing her hands."

"The Lord forbid that I should believe in ghosts; but still I'd rather not have heard that story; for if I happen to go through the upper rooms, in the dark, or look out of any of the windows, it will scarcely be in human nature not to take a patch of moonlight, or the silvery bark of a white maple or beech tree, for the ghost of the white-robed lady!" said Susan.

"Ah, child! if *dat's* de worst you see"'

"But who was she when she was alive?"

"Ah, honey, she lib many and many a year ago! Her name Miss Blanche Brande. She was crossed in love, you see, child, and she's jes pined away and died, and has been walking here eber since."

"A very weak-minded ghost! I don't think I shall be afraid of Miss Blanche," said Susan.

"Wait till midnight, honey! only jes wait till midnight."

As it was now very late the old woman arose to take leave.

"Der's wood enough in for yer mornin' fire, honey, and please de Lor' I'll step up here yerly in de mornin', and fetch yer anoder pail of fresh water to put de kittle on.

"Thank you, yes; if you and your old man can engage to bring the water and cut the wood, and assist me in the little house-work when your services are needed, my mistress is liberal, and will pay you well."

"I wasn't thinkin' nothin' 'bout no pay, honey. Howsever, jes as you please 'bout dat. I'll be 'roun' yerly in de mornin'," said Amphy, preparing to depart, by tying her check handkerchief closely under her chin, and taking up her thick walking-stick.

"Good night, child. I'd a heap liefer it be *you* nor *me* stayin' in dis lonesome ole house all night. Marster bress you, honey."

And with this benediction, the namesake of the ocean goddess departed.

Susan was not more than ordinarily superstitious—that is to say—in broad day-light, or in a room full of company, she did not believe in "ghosts;" but at ten o'clock of a dark night, alone in a room of an old dilapidated country house, reputed to be haunted, she felt at least uncomfortable.

She quickly set the kitchen in order, and went into the parlor to re-join her mistress.

She found Lady Montressor in the very same attitude in which she had two hours before left her—with her elbow resting upon the table, her head bowed upon her hand, and her dark ringlets overshadowing her face. It seemed that in two hours she had not once moved. The fire had burned so nearly out, that nothing remained but a few embers.

"Dear lady, it is after ten o'clock—will you retire?"

"Yes," with a deep sigh, answered Lady Montressor.

"Your chamber is well aired and warmed—shall I show you into it now?"

"Yes," with another weary sigh, replied the lady, rising.

Susan opened the communicating door and ushered her mistress into the bed-room.

There was a cheerful fire burning on the broad fire-place and diffusing a ruddy glow throughout the large room.

"I hope you find everything here as comfortable as circumstances will admit of, my lady."

"Yes"—in the same exhausted manner answered the mourner—then, in her thoughtfulness of her devoted servant, she added—"I thank you, Susan?"

The maid hurried away into the hall, and returned with the large traveling basket in which she had packed her mistress's night-dress and toilet articles. These she quickly produced and laid out. Then she assisted her lady to undress, and when she was quite ready for bed, prepared as usual to leave her alone for her evening devotions, which were the very last acts of Lady Montressor, before lying down to her nightly rest.

"Do you think you will sleep well to-night, my lady?" inquired Susan, affectionately.

"As well as usual, my girl," answered Lady Montressor, evasively.

"Good night, then, my lady; may the angels guard you."

"Good night—— but stay; are your sleeping accommodations comfortable?"

"Yes, I thank your ladyship; I have the room directly opposite to yours, across the hall; if you should be wakeful, or need anything in the night, dear lady, please knock me up—I shall be sure to hear you."

"Thank you, my child, I will, if there should be any need. Now go to your rest. Good night."

"Good night, dear Madam—and may the Lord be with you," said Susan, as she retired and closed the door behind her.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE GRAVE-YARD GHOST.

> "Strange things, the neighbors say, have happened there!
> Wild shrieks have issued from the hollow tombs,
> Dead maids have come again, and walked about;
> And a great bell has tolled unrung, untouched."
>
> BLAIR'S GRAVE.

Susan crossed the hall and entered her own chamber, which was even more scantily furnished than the other rooms. There was a wide fire-place filled with evergreens and flanked by two closets, as in the others. And there was a four-post bedstead with a bed well made up and covered with a comfortable blue and white check counterpane; and there was an arm-chair and a table upon which stood a quadrant, a compass, an old chronometer, Bouditch's Navigation, and other sailors' belongings. On the mantle-piece were various curiosities, such as a mummy's hand, a New Zealander's skull, a Chinese woman's skeleton foot and other such enlivening articles of virtu collected by the late Captain Brande in his various voyages.

"Ugh! it's enough to chill one's blood, even without the ghost of the white-robed lady! Well! it's a comfort at last that one can say their prayers," said Susan, looking around upon the weird scene.

"And as I hope to be saved," she added, as she examined the room—"there are no shutters outside the windows, and no curtains within! So that if the ghost of Blanche chooses to look in through the panes of glass I shall have to shut my eyes to avoid seeing her! Well! praise be to Heaven there remains prayer at least, and no one can be very much afraid who prays very hard!"

And with this consoling conclusion, Susan examined the bed, and finding the sheets all fresh and sweet, hastily undressed herself, said her prayers, put out the candle, and jumped into bed.

But she could not sleep. Reason with herself as she might, the utter isolation of the house, the emptiness of all the chambers, the profound solitude of her own room; the vague dread of runaway negroes, of whose occasional acts of violence she had sometimes read with horror; the story of the white-robed lady, whose ghost was said to wander through the house and grounds;—thoughts that at noonday, or in company, would have moved her mirthful scorn, now at midnight when she was alone, filled her heart with superstitious terror, which she could neither explain nor discard.

On the right hand of her bed was a large window, unprotected by either curtain or blind, and as often, as in her restless tossing about, she turned to that side, the whole outer scene in that direction was visible to her.

And such a scene! a table land, with here and there a solitary spectral pine, or cedar tree, and in the midst an old family grave-yard, with ghostly tomb-stones gleaming dimly white under the clouded star-light. The sea was not visible, but its monotonous and mournful murmur was all but too audible, and formed a strangely appropriate accompaniment to the gloomy aspect.

At each turning, and each glance out upon the wild, dark landscape, Susan grew more nervous, and consequently more superstitious and fearful.

And presently, a little after midnight, the wind arose with a sigh and a moan, that seemed like the voice of some denizen of that grave-yard, waking from his death-sleep, to walk the earth at night.

Susan covered her head and held her breath. Then half suffocating, she uncovered it, and looked out. There were the ghostly tombstones gleaming dimly under the clouded sky.

"Oh! my goodness alive! I shall go crazy if I stay here!" cried Susan, rising up into a sitting posture and throwing the bed-clothes off her. She peered cautiously towards the window-pane and looked out. This position gave her a much more extensive view than she had before possessed.

But after the first glance, Susan fell back with a half-suppressed scream, and buried her face in the bed-clothes.

She had seen the form of a white-robed, graceful, female figure moving slowly up and down among the tomb-stones!

Her eyes were blinded by the blankets pressed around them, yet she could not shut out the vision of that white-robed, beautiful form with its flowing black hair and clasped hands.

Susan's first impulse was to fly to her lady's room and rouse her; but terror had deprived her of the use of her limbs, and so she lay shuddering and helpless. Presently she remembered the Almighty Protector, and fell to praying.

Now, it is certain that the sincere prayer of a simple, faithful soul, is the antidote for all fear; and in praying, the wild throb's of the girl's heart subsided.

And with returning calmness came the power of motion, and the first impulse of seeking her lady's presence and protection; but then arose the generous thought of not disturbing her rest. And forming a resolution of self-restraint and patience, Susan recommended herself to the care of Heaven, and ventured once more to creep to the side of the bed and look towards the window. The spectral form had disappeared, and with a sigh of relief, Susan sank back upon her pillow. The re-action of so great a nervous excitement produced its natural effects, and Susan sank into the deep sleep of exhaustion.

The broad light of morning falling full upon her face awoke her. She started on seeing herself in a strange bed and room, and for some moments could not recollect how she came there; but when memory returned, she arose at once, feeling how heavily and how long she must have slept, and how late it must be.

She hurried on her clothes and went softly across the hall to the room of her mistress, whom she found apparently sleeping.

Then she returned and entered the kitchen. No sooner had her footfall sounded on the plank floor than a knock at the back door arrested her attention. She went and opened it, to find old Amphy there with a pail of water, waiting.

"De Lors, child! how late you—dem[*] does get up, my patience alive! Here I's bin t'ree times to de door, and dis time I jis sots myse'f down to wait —ef it's all day! But I do spose how you was tired."

"Yes, very tired! come in."

The old creature entered and proceeded to fill the kettle, while Susan lighted the fire.

"How you sleep last night. You didn't see nuffi'n, did you?"

"Hush—I'll tell you after a bit. I don't believe I really saw anything, but I believe I *fancied* I saw that white vestured female figure gliding among the tombstones," said Susan, with a retrospective shudder.

"*'Tis she!* Sure as eber you lib in dis worl' *'tis she!*" exclaimed the old woman in a voice of deep horror.

"Nonsense! it was imagination, optical illusion, no doubt," replied Susan, whose superstitious terrors had disappeared with the shadows of night, and whose right reason had returned with daylight.

"Don't matter what you call it, child,—whedder 'magination, optional solution, or ghos'—it's all one and de same thing, and I rudder see a live lion or a robber, nor one o' *dem.* Has you any browned coffee?"

"No; I will get you to brown some," said Susan, going to a hamper and taking out a packet, which she handed to her assistant.

Then leaving the old woman to her task, Susan once more visited the room of her mistress whom she now found awake.

"Have I disturbed you, by coming in, my lady?"

"No, dear girl, I am about to rise."

"Did you sleep well, Madam?"

"As usual, Susan."

"Nothing disturbed you in the night, I hope, my lady?"

"Nothing, Susan."

"No, of course not, *her* windows have shutters to them, and are, besides, on the opposite side of the house to the grave-yard," thought Susan, with a momentary relapse into credulity.

But her mistress was now rising, and Susan busied herself in assisting at her toilet.

Mary Queen of Scotts has been criticised for dressing as carefully each day, in her prison of Fotheringay, as at her palace of Holyrood. I have no doubt that it was a mere mechanical matter of habit, rather than of care or thought. Certainly it was only from force of habit that Lady Montressor, in the course of her simple matinal toilet, seated herself in a chair and yielded up her beautiful head of ebon hair, to be carefully dressed by her maid, whose affectionate hands braided up the back locks and rolled them in as neat a knot, and divided and disposed the front locks in as beautiful ringlets, as if, instead of hiding in this half ruined house, her ladyship had been going to receive morning visitors, in her boudoir of Montressor Castle. And with the same careful attention, she arranged the black cashmere morning dress, with its white lace collar and cuffs.

And then, as was her custom, she left the lady to her devotions, and passed into the parlor to open the shutters, light the fire, and set the solitary table for her morning meal.

Then she returned to the kitchen, where she found that the old busy-body there had set the coffee, made biscuits and put them to bake, and was now engaged in preparing a fat partridge for the gridiron.

"Dear me! where did that quail come from?" asked Susan, in surprise and delight that this luxury was provided for her lady's table.

"Dunno what you call *quail*, but if you mean dis ere *peertridge*, better ax my old man dere, honey; he kin handle a gun now at a hunner year ole, good as any young feller goin', I tell yer all good; you hears me, don't you?" replied the old woman, proudly and fondly rolling her head towards the back door, whither now Susan directed her eyes to see old Neptune standing there, leaning on his fowling-piece, and smiling meekly as was his wont.

The old man took off his hat and handkerchief, and bowed with his usual gentle salute of—

"Sarvint, Mist'ess."

"Good morning, father—you brought these?"

"Yes, Mist'ess—I trought how de Madam, looking delikky, would like somethin' relishing for her breakfas'."

"I'll tell her you brought it; you are so very good. I am sure she will value your kindness."

"'Taint nuffin much, Mist'ess; wish I could do more for de Madam; she do look *wonderful* delikky."

And the old creature spoke sincerely; such an instance of thoughtful kindness was nothing unusual in him or his race; for there is not on all the earth, perhaps, a set of creatures more "kindly affectionate" than the old family servants of Maryland.

This old man seemed delighted with the pleasure he had given, and setting down his gun, went and busied himself with chopping and piling up wood, and making himself "generally useful."

"Now, Mist'ess," he said, "you has wood enough to las' you all day."

"I am very much obliged to you, indeed. But I am not *Mistress*," said Susan, smiling.

"What shall I call you, then, honey?"

"My name is Susan Copsewood, and I am only Lady Mont—— Gimini!—I mean Mrs. Estel's maid. So you may call me anything you please except Mistress."

"Yes, Miss Susan," replied the old man, mildly.

"Aye! that will do very well. Call me that, father."

The old creature smiled; he was delighted to hear this rosy-cheeked, pleasant-spoken girl continue to call him father—not knowing that it was a title of respect Susan was in the habit of giving to very old men, of an humble class of life, in her native country.

As the breakfast was now ready, this "neat-handed" maid arranged it carefully upon a waiter and carried it into the parlor, where she found her mistress seated at the table in her old attitude of mournful abstraction.

Susan arranged the service upon the table and then, with the purpose of engaging her mistress in conversation, said, triumphantly—

"There, my lady! look at that quail!"

"Thank you, Susan," answered the lady, abstractedly.

"But you don't look at it—you don't ask where it came from."

Lady Montressor made no comment, and Susan slightly piqued, observed—

"Oh, to be sure, we are in the fabulous country, where quails fly in at the kitchen windows, already roasted!"

"My dear girl, what has vexed you?" inquired her ladyship, kindly, noticing now, for the first time, that her faithful attendant looked troubled.

"Nothing, my dear lady, only that you have no more curiosity about this quail, which I consider a god-send, than if your father's gamekeeper had furnished it for the Hyde Hall breakfast table."

At this sudden mention of her old home, Lady Montressor grew pale as death, and Susan in alarm hastened to apologize.

"No, no—say nothing, you are not to blame, child."

There was a pause, and then Susan entreated her mistress to try to partake of some breakfast, and especially to try the "quail."

And Lady Montressor, rather to gratify the girl than to please herself, complied.

The idea of telling her mistress about the grave-yard vision of the white-robed lady occurred to Susan; but she prudently dismissed the gloomy subject, and told instead the pleasant story of the old centennial sportsman, whose gun had supplied the game for breakfast.

Lady Montressor listened, and replied—

"Bear the old man my thanks, Susan, and do not let his efforts go unrewarded."

And Susan did as her mistress directed.

After breakfast, and after the young woman, with the assistance of Amphy, had put the lower rooms in order, and unpacked and disposed Lady Montressor's few books upon the parlor table—leaving her ladyship engaged in reading, she went up stairs and explored the upper rooms, which she found completely bare of furniture, and even of window glasses—the closed shutters concealing this latter named deficiency from the outside; the plastering was cracked, and hanging in dangerous masses from the ceiling; and the locks on the doors were all broken; but the floor, and all the wood and brick work were perfectly sound.

From the second story, Susan went up into the attic, which she found in even a worse condition—the window-sashes being entirely gone, and not only the plastering, but the lathing broken. But here, also, the plank and brick work was sound, although the deep stains on walls and floor proved that in rainy weather the roof leaked badly.

"Horridly out of repair, but a good, soundly-built house, for all that; and a few hundred dollars will make it a very comfortable one," was the conclusion to which Susan came.

She then went down stairs, and inquired of old Amphy how she might best reach the village of Eastville, to which she wished to go, to procure workmen to come out and repair the house.

Amphy assured her that the horse "Charley" and the carry-all, that had been left by Miss Barbara, in the old man's care, was at her service, and that the old man himself would be happy to drive her over there.

This plan was no sooner proposed than accepted, and Susan went in to inform her mistress of her projected journey.

She found Lady Montressor seated near the window, with the book held idly on her lap in one careless hand, while the other arm, resting its elbow on the window-sill, supported her drooping head. Susan proposed her errand, and received the lady's ready acquiescence.

Old Amphy promised, during the maid's absence, to mind the house, and to cook one of her own chickens for the lady's dinner; and old Neptune brought up the carry-all and horse to take Susan to the village. She prepared herself and soon set out.

She was absent several hours, but found it impossible to get any workman to promise to come to the Headland House in less than a week or ten days. And with this insufficient satisfaction she was obliged to return home.

There was in the grove near the house a curious arbor, the work of Captain Brande, erected of six jaw bones of the whale, set up on end in a circular form, and covered with a thick growth of the trumpet vine with its shining, dark green, star-shaped leaves, and flaming red, vase-like flowers.

As Susan drove into the park, she saw Lady Montressor sitting within that arbor, gazing out abstractedly upon the sea. Susan alighted and went up to her.

"The evening is chilly, dear lady, pray do not sit here," she urged, with affectionate solicitude.

The lady lifted her large mournful eyes to the face of her faithful attendant, and without a word arose to accompany her to the house.

Old Amphy had tea ready in the parlor, and soon after it was served and cleared away, Lady Montressor retired to her chamber and dismissed her attendant for the night.

Old Amphy complained of fatigue from having sat up later than usual upon the preceding night, took leave and departed.

Susan, also, from loss of rest, was very tired and sleepy, so she fastened up the house, put out the fire, said her prayers and went to bed. But with the darkness of solitude, and the silence, returned her superstitious terrors. She shut her eyes, and then, not content with that safe-guard against spectral sights, she drew the bed-clothes tightly over her head. But Susan had capacious lungs that required a good supply of fresh air, and so the sense of being half-suffocated grew so intolerable that she was forced to uncover her face for the purpose of breathing. But she kept her eyelids closed.

Good angels! how solitary, how silent, and how dark it was! She could not see the darkness, but like the silence and the solitude, she *felt* it, in the core of her heart, and quaked with vague terror.

It was long before she could quiet herself.

At last, however, she fell asleep.

How long she had slept she did not know, for sleepers take no account of time; and why she awoke, she could not tell, for dreamers are not always cognizant of causes;—but as she awoke, she thoughtlessly opened her eyes, turned over, faced the uncurtained window, and saw the half-obscured, star-lighted sky, the level table land with its sentinel trees—the grave-yard, with its gleaming spectral-like tomb-stones, and there—oh, Heaven of Heavens!—the gliding form of the graceful, white-robed woman!

The panic-stricken girl had no power to withdraw her gaze that seemed fascinated to that beautiful form, with its flowing, snowy drapery, and streaming jet black hair, and long fair hands that she clasped and wrung like one in deepest grief, as in slow and measured steps she paced up and down. Presently, in turning away from her monotonous path, to Susan's unutterable horror she slowly and steadily approached her window!

Just as that wild white face looked in from the outer darkness, Susan, half swooning, sunk back upon her pillow, with barely strength enough left to draw the counterpane over her swimming head; and there she lay half paralyzed with terror, her heart quivering, almost dying in her bosom with the momentary expectation of some supernatural denouement, until at length, as before, the deathly sense of suffocation, and the imminent necessity of breathing, compelled her to uncover her face.

All was solitude, silence and darkness around her. The spectral face had disappeared from the window. Still in deadly terror of its return, she closed her eyes and lay shivering. She would have given all that she possessed in the world for the companionship of any human being. Yet in affectionate solicitude for the uninterrupted repose of her suffering mistress, she refrained from flying for shelter into the chamber of the latter.

And so she lay cowering and shuddering, occasionally lifting her eyelids a little way, to steal a cautious glance around the room and through the window; but all continued silent, dark and solitary, until near morning, when the joyous crowing of Aunt Amphy's chickens, and the cheerful red streaks along the eastern horizon, heralding the approach of day, put her superstitious, midnight terrors to flight, and enabled her wearied frame to sink to sleep.

She must have slept long and heavily, when a sharp tapping upon the pane of glass nearest her ear caused her to start up in affright.

It was now very late in the morning, and Aunt Amphy stood outside rapping on the window.

"Marster's dear sake, chile! *is* you dead, or is yer gwine sleep foreber?"

"Oh! is that you, Mother Amphy?"

"Sure its me, an' its gwine on to seven o'clock, chile."

"Oh! is it? I will get up directly and let you in," said Susan, rising and hurrying on her clothes.

"*Dar,* what you tink of *dat* for your Mist'ess' breakfas'?" inquired the old woman, triumphantly holding up a fine fat "red neck" before the window.

"What sort of a bird do you call *that?*" asked Susan.

"Bird? De Lor! Dis ain't no *bird* chile! It is one of the bestest ducks 'cept de canwas back as flies over our waters! Its a red-neck, an' my ole darlin' shoot him dis mornin' for de chile's breakfas'."

"Why, your old man is the best of gamekeeper's. My lady must reward him handsomely. He certainly is the very best of gamekeepers!"

"Lor' bless yer soul, honey, no he ain't! De dear ole angel, he neber was no gamekeeper! De darlin' ole creetur is too free-hearted to keep anything, much less game, when dat delikky chile in dere might want it for her breakfas'."

"Oh! you have mistaken my meaning, but I will tell you all about it," said Susan, as she went around to the back door to admit the kind-hearted old woman.

And that morning, while old Amphy picked the red-neck and dressed it for breakfast, Susan let her into some of the mysteries of game laws as they existed in the "old country."

Whereupon the namesake of the Ocean Queen expressed her astonishment and indignation "Dat any lords an' ladies should 'sume for to 'nopolize de Lord's free, wild creeturs as was ev'dently 'tended for de good of all, bofe black an' white; an' she thank de Lord, *she* did, as she lived in a free country, where no sich divilments 'vailed!"

Susan laughed gaily at the old woman's excitement, and then soothed her by praising her zeal and skill in cooking.

This day passed much as the the preceding one had done. Susan, in generous self-control, refrained from disturbing her mistress with the gloomy story of the apparition in the grave-yard, and which now, in daylight, she tried to persuade herself to have been only the effect of imagination. She determined, however, not to leave her window bare and exposed to the visits of such a frightful spectre, however it might have been conjured up; so she took the skirt of a long green merino riding-dress, and manufactured a thick curtain, which she hung up at the window beside her bed.

Consequently, that night, if the ghost walked in the grave-yard, Susan did not know it; by diligently saying over her prayers, she fell asleep, and her rest remained undisturbed.

Nor was she again troubled with ghostly visions up to the night previous to the arrival of Barbara Brande's vessel.

CHAPTER XX.

LORD MONTRESSOR'S ARRIVAL.

> "Oh! had we never, never met,
> Or, would this heart e'en now forget,
> How linked, how blest we might have been
> Had fate not frowned so dark between!"
>
> MOORE.

That was a glorious morning, as I said, in the golden month of October. Susan had risen very early, and was already in the kitchen when Amphy arrived. The face of the old creature was all aglow as she entered, exclaiming—

"Mornin' to yer, honey! Mornin'!"

"Why, mother Amphy, you look as overjoyed as if somebody had left you a fortune!" said Susan.

"Better an' dat, honey! please my Heabenly Marster, it is, chile! better 'an dat! Miss Barbara 'riv'—come out'n here an' let me show you a beautiful sight!"

Susan followed her through the hall, and out at the front door, where they stopped, and stood upon the old ricketty porch, while Amphy pointed out at sea, exclaiming—

"Dar! what you tink o' *dat!*"

Susan's glance followed the direction of the black finger, and lighted upon a pretty craft, anchored off the Headland.

"Dar! what you say *now!* don't she look like a white swan, dough, a sittin' on de water? dat Miss Barbara's vessel," cried Amphy, exultingly.

"But how do you know it is Miss Barbara's?" asked Susan.

"How I know? De Lor! how I know anything? by the quincequonces, caze no oder wessel any call to anker here, 'cept 'tis de Brande's!"

And she was right; for even while she spoke, a boat was lowered from the vessel, entered by a party, and rowed rapidly towards the beach below the Headland.

"Dar! now, ole as my eyes is, I kin see dat's Miss Barbara in de starn, and dat boy's little Marser Edwy, and dem der oarsmen is our own sonnies,—But—who de debbil dat sponshous lookin' gemman as Miss Barbra's got long o' her? Honey, you look! yer's got younger eyes nor me."

Susan looked, and with astonishment and affright turned away.

"Why, what de mischief de matter wid you, honey?"

"I'm cold," said Susan, shortly turning into the house.

She had seen Lord Montressor in the boat! Lord Montressor was approaching the shore!

She went immediately to her mistress's door and listened. All was silent in that chamber. She turned the latch, and entered softly.

Lady Montressor was lying—with her arms thrown up over her head, and her black hair escaped from her little lace cap, and flowing over the pillow—in that deep and heavy sleep, that in the morning often visits the mourner, who has waked and wept all night.

"I will not call her! trouble will come soon enough. That emperor was a fool who directed his courtiers never to wake him unless it was to hear bad news! Bad news is always too fast in traveling—we needn't hurry to meet it! Though why the intelligence of Lord Montressor's arrival should be considered bad news I do not know," thought Susan, as she went into her own room, to "smarten" herself up. After putting on her little cap and silk apron, she went out into the hall, expecting that by this time the party from the boat had landed.

She was correct—the party were ascending the bluff; but arrived at its summit, they paused and talked a few moments, and then separated.

Lord Montressor, attended by the boy Edwy, and followed by his groom with the guns and game bags, took the narrow path leading into the deep woods toward's Neptune's cabin. And Barbara Brande, attended by young Nep., came up towards the house.

Old Amphy who was impatiently watching for her approach, now set off in a run to meet her. At any other time Susan might have been convulsed with laughter, at seeing this aged octogenarian trotting off, with her head thrown back, her elbows acute, and every step showing the whole broad sole of her shoeless foot.

It was a pleasant sight to see Barbara's handsome, ruddy countenance, break into a cordial smile of greeting as she put out both her hands to grasp those of her affectionate old servant.

Then they came on talking together, until they reached the dilapidated porch where Susan stood waiting.

"How do you do, Susan? I hope your lady is well," said Barbara, kindly offering her hand to the girl.

"My lady is just about as well as usual, Ma'am; but I don't know as it would be quite convenient to her ladyship to receive visitors—especially gentlemen," replied Susan, who, however unjustly and unreasonably, seemed to consider Miss Brande a sort of traitress in having sprung Lord Montressor upon the Headland.

"Nevertheless, I think she will not be displeased to see me," said Barbara, good humoredly. "Let her know that I have come, my girl."

"She is not yet risen, Ma'am, or even awake."

"True, indeed, I had not reflected that it is yet very early. Well, my girl, your lady expects me, will you let me pass into the house?"

"Oh! I beg your pardon, Ma'am!" exclaimed Susan, blushing at the unconscious rudeness of which she had been guilty, and springing aside to let Miss Brande pass.

"Susan, come with me, my girl,. A part of my business here, is to open some secret closets that you would never find out, and offer their contents —stores of West India sweetmeats, pickles, spices, cordials and so on—to your mistress if she will favor me by accepting them. And I had rather deliver them up to you, now, while she sleeps and you are at leisure, for when she wakes I presume she will require your attendance at her toilet, and after she is dressed, she will probably wish to see me," said Barbara, leading the way into the parlor.

"Decidedly," thought Susan—"my lady had little need to draw her funds from the banker's. These savages here will support her! The black ones furnish game, and the white ones supply the sweet meats. In fact I begin to like these barbarians," she concluded, as she followed Miss Brande into the parlor.

Barbara went to the side of the fireplace, touched a spring, and what seemed an oak panel, flew open, revealing one of those deep, hidden closets, so frequently found in old-fashioned country houses, and whose shelves were here laden with rows above rows, of canisters, jars, and bottles, all filled with imported luxuries, and hermetically sealed.

"Here! this cupboard contains the sweetmeats and cordials," said Barbara, taking out a tin cannister and a bottle which she placed upon a chair and before re-closing the pannel.

Then she went to the other side of the mantel-piece and opened a corresponding closet similarly furnished.

"This one contains the potted, spiced meats and the pickles," she said, taking down two jars and placing them on the chair beside the bottle and the cannister, and then shutting the pannel, she turned to Susan and said—

"The contents of these cupboards are most freely at your lady's service, if she will accept them; and now you know the secret of opening the doors."

"Decidedly I *do* like these barbarians," thought Susan. Then aloud she answered—

"I thank you very much, indeed, Miss Brande. There is my mistress's bell! I must go to her. Pray make yourself at home, Miss Brande. My mistress, I know, will be very happy to see *you;* and breakfast will be ready in a short time."

"I thank you, I breakfasted on board the vessel. Don't let me detain you from Mrs. Estel."

"'*Mrs. Estel!*' She still calls her 'Mrs. Estel!' I wonder if she is in ignorance that my lady bears another name!" thought Susan, whose mind was still in the deepest perplexity. But before she could satisfy herself upon the point, she was startled by the second ringing of her lady's bell, and hurried away to obey its summons.

Barbara Brande called in her old servant, Amphy, who had been lingering in the hall, and scolded her for going bare-footed in the middle of October.

"De Lor! Miss Barbra, chile, I likes to have my fut *cool* on de soft groun'."

"Yes, your foot will be cool *in* the soft ground if you go on so," said Barbara.

"I gwine *stop* of it, honey, 'deed I is!"

"If you *don't* it will stop *you*—that's all. Now here—here are some goodies to comfort you and your old man these coming winter evenings," said Miss Brande giving her the cannister, bottle and jar. "And in the boat, below, you will find some winter clothing and some flannels rolled up together."

"Yes, honey—yes. Yes, chile, many thanks to you; and I'll tend to it."

"Where is the old man?"

"Gone down to de boat to see de boys, chile! 'Deed is de ole angel, honey!"

Meanwhile Susan had passed into Lady Montressor's room.

"Susan, my girl, whose voice was that I heard in the parlor?" inquired her ladyship.

"Miss Barbara Brande's, my lady."

"Ah! she has come then?"

"Yes, my lady—this morning at sunrise."

"I believe I will rise, Susan—for I shall be glad to see Miss Brande."

"Yes, Madam," replied Susan, so gravely that Lady Montressor looked at her, and observing for the first time her troubled expression of countenance, exclaimed—

"Why, Susan, what is the matter with you, my girl?"

"Miss Barbara did not come *alone,* my lady!"

"Miss Barbara did not come alone? Well, I really do not suppose she did—but what of that?"

"A great deal, dear lady."

"Good Heavens! Susan, what do you mean?"

"Dear Lady Montressor, did the possibility never occur to you, that he who traced us from Exeter to Baltimore might even trace us from Baltimore here?"

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[*] Negro for—you all,

"Oh! no, no, no. Oh! Heaven of Heavens, no! Do not say that, Susan! Do not tell me that Lord Montressor has followed us hither!" exclaim- the lady in an extremity of distress.

"I wish, dear Madam, that I could say so; but that wouldn't alter the facts; his lordship landed with Miss Brande, this morning."

"Oh, fate, fate! Oh, fate, fate!" cried Lady Montressor, wringing her hands.

"Yes, fate! it is just fate! and it is no use to struggle against it, dear lady! I would not try if I were you! I would just yield!" exclaimed Susan, who could never be brought to relinquish the hope that her lady might be persuaded to return to England, and to all the fancied advantages of her social position.

"Be silent on that subject, Susan. Oh, angels in Heaven, how shall I meet this new demand upon my firmness! Susan! where is his lordship?"

"That is the wonderful part of it, my lady! I could easily guess that he might have followed us here, but that after landing, without coming near the house, he should take his servant and his guns, and go off to the woods for a day's shooting, is what I cannot comprehend at all."

"And it is what his lordship would never do, if he knew of our presence, and had followed us hither! There is more mystery here, Susan! It is just possible that he has *not* followed us—yet, even in that case, it is scarcely possible that he can escape discovering us."

"Ah! my dear lady, if he does not yet know of your presence here, it would be very easy to conceal ourselves from his knowledge, except for one thing."

"And what is that?"

"Your name, dear lady—your name! Mrs. Estel! Ah! if you had only called yourself Mrs. Thompson or Mrs. Smith!"

"Ah, but my girl, neither of these names was mine; while that which I am known by is my baptismal name, and the only one, that I am certain of having a claim upon, and the only one that in wearing, I shall do no injury to another!" said the lady, mournfully.

Susan sighed, and looked into that troubled countenance with the wish—with the prayer that she herself could only bear a portion of her lady's burthen of sorrow.

"Assist me to rise, my girl, and hand me my dressing-gown and slippers. There! thank you. Now go and give my respects to Miss Brande, and request her to come hither," said Lady Montressor, as she slipped on her morning-gown, put her feet in shoes, and sank into the one plain armchair.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

◆

MAY—A CHILD.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE

Oh, braid her tresses broad and bright,
The day is nearly past—
She waited, patient, for the night,
And sleep hath come at last;
So still and white—so solemn-deep—
How wild the wind is blowing!
Oh, friends, I dare not fall asleep
Whilst you her shroud are sewing!

When next the June's red surges break
Across the windy night,
The Summer's dainty hands will make
Her grave-roof low and bright;
Bright with the moss-bell's purple sheen,
The daisy's waxen blossoms,
And the rosemary's tender green
They lay on dead young bosoms.

The marble at her head and feet
Can never seem to me,
Nor any lily pale and sweet,
One half so pale as she!
But, softly fold the small white hands
At rest from work forever,
This eve she walks the golden strands
Of the Eternal river.

◆

A CONVERSATION,

AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

BY CLARA SYDNNEY.

"Why, in the name of all that's curious, May Benton, have you never got married?"

This question was asked by a gentleman of some thirty-five or six years of age, who had been for nearly twenty minutes closely watching the motions of a lady who sat near him at a work table.

The gentleman was a fine, noble-looking man, with frank, well-formed features, and pleasing expression. He was handsomely dressed, and to judge by the looks of his hair you might have said that he had a wife, had he looked *in other respects* like a married man; which he did *not*.

The room in which the two were sitting betokened wealth and taste. Its occupants were evidently in the upper ranks of life.

The lady addressed was a person of fair, interesting face, and graceful form. She certainly did look remarkably well as she bent her head with its abundant and shining hair, and plied her white hands in the task which employed her sight, and apparently her whole thoughts.

Probably a conviction of her attractiveness and worth had caused the question which her companion put in such a hearty abrupt tone, that May started and dropped the red worsted work upon which she had been intent.

"What a question!" she cried, with a light laugh—"just as if I cared about being married!"

"Why should you not care, May? Surely it is the best and happiest state for man or woman."

"Granted! with a proviso," said May; "but, Mr. Rossiter, if you think so, why have *you* never married?"

"You are a true Yankee, May, and answer a question by putting another; but *tell me*, now, why you are, at thirty years of age, still single?"

"How do you dare to say I'm thirty years old? Upon my word, if you were not brother to my sister-in-law I'd not speak to you again for a week."

May pretended to pout; and the pout was quite becoming to her full, arched lips.

"Didn't you yourself tell me your age? and only the day before yesterday. Your memory seems very short, Miss Benton."

"Well, I didn't expect you was going to throw it up to me that I was an old maid, to pay me for my confidence in you."

"Oh! May—did I say that?—and if I did, you can break my 'glass-house' by flinging back my very taunt. But, come now, do answer my question."

"I never could get anybody to have me," said May, shortly. "Are you satisfied?"

"No. You need not tell me that a person so interesting and attractive as you are, has never had ardent lovers. I know better, May—so tell me *truly* why you are not Mrs. Somebody, now?"

May suddenly sobered down and said, nervously—"It's because no man *whose love I could return* ever loved me."

And she resumed her work.

How her face had altered. There had come over it a stern, hard expression, as if she were saying, inly—

"It matters not—I can wrestle down these yearnings for something worthy and noble, and true and strong, against which to lean; for something winning and tender and loving, which to love. If there is no heart on earth, whose best love is the love I want, I can do without it—I can walk to the *end* of life as I have walked *thus far*."

Rossiter regarded her in long silence. He had known her for many years, and had often wondered at her great indifference to the attentions of gentlemen. He had even, on more than one occasion, taken her to task for her manner towards them.

"You wont allow them to become acquainted with you at all," he said. "When you are introduced to a man, that's the last of it. All the young men admire, but they are afraid of you. You chill them to death. I heard one man say that he thought you a beautiful and interesting creature; but then he would as soon undertake to warm into love *an iceberg* as yourself—even if he had *courage* enough to make the attempt."

A skeptical smile had been the only answer to such remarks.

How could May believe that she was capable of inspiring affection in others when those who knew her best were so lightly touched by it.

Rossiter had been for three or four years absent, and had newly returned when the above conversation took place. He was a comfortable old bachelor, happy in disposition; happy in possessing an independent fortune; and happy in his sister's home—not to say happy in the companionship of May, whom he honestly believed to be about the best and most lovely girl in the world. He had once dearly loved, and suddenly lost, a fair, promised bride; and ever since he had hardly allowed himself to think of loving. And, besides, he didn't know as he wished to marry. He was well satisfied with his "state and condition"—when he was at home; to be sure he did feel uneasy and dissatisfied all the while he was abroad. Nobody's company seemed to fill the void in his heart. He did miss his sister so—and *May*—oh! how glad he was to see them when he returned—and how strange he thought it was that May didn't rush at him in the hall and hug and kiss him just as his sister did; but he took full satisfaction of the contrary creature when she did come to welcome him.

"And so May isn't married yet," he said; "well it's rather too bad; but I'm *glad of it*."

May came very near sighing, but she didn't—at least not audibly. How many still-born sighs there are in the world!

It is well it is no crime to smother them at their birth.

Well, Rossiter sat studying that still, stern face before him; and he thought new thoughts—new as to their present relations.

"May," he said at length—"May, was ever there a man that you could have loved had he asked it?"

Like a crimson dye, up rose the hot blood of that bowed face, and the hard look was burnt out on the instant—but she only said, not lifting her head or eyes—

"*That* you have no right to ask."

"I have small need to ask, dear May—forgive me if I mistake; but I feel as if I had been favored by a revelation of—of—that I have been a blind and stupid fellow as ever lived. May, if a man whom you regarded as you do the plain old fellow before you, were to ask for your love, what would you say?"

"Yes!" said May, dropping her head till her face was hid among the worsted.

"Will you have *me?*" cried Rossiter, springing up, and oversetting his chair.

"Yes," said a voice from the worsted depths.

Rossiter was on his knees, and most fervently embracing chair, worsted, and woman.

"*Marry* me! will you marry *me?* said he.

"Yes," said the voice from amid the worsted.

"Then hold your head up, and let me look upon the face of my wife. St. George, May—I believe I've loved you for years!"

"And I *know* I've loved *you* almost ever since I knew you," said May, yielding to the gentle force which drew her from her low seat, and led her to one where there was *room for two*.

"And that's why you never cared about any other man's company and attention, my May?"

"Yes," said May, "you begin to understand it now."

"Oh! May, my beauty, my dear, good girl, why didn't I think of this before? Why *didn't* you tell me, May?"

"Tell you! I should have looked well, shouldn't I?"

"Indeed you *would* have looked well—charming in my eyes. What a pity that you had not confidence enough in me to have allowed me to guess at the truth before. Why, May, I would have married you years ago, and have been the happiest and most grateful fellow alive. How stupid men CAN be!—but come, May, we must go and tell my sister. She will be delighted, indeed."

And he led the embarrassed and blushing May into the presence of his sister; and admitted her to the great rejoicing; and in a few weeks from that day Rossiter and May were no more twain, but one flesh. Nobody knows what a month may bring forth—nor to what the simplest question may lead one.

◆

THE OLD CHAMBER.

BY MARY W. STANLEY GIBSON.

It was not much of a place to look at—being neither papered, plastered, nor painted. But what of that? We could play at all sorts of games without any fear of spoiling the room, and the golden sunlight that came pouring through the two dusty windows in the roof, was worth far more to us than the brightest gas light could have been. It was dark and warm in the summer time, and at the farther end a little low loft was partitioned off, that seemed full of ghosts and hobgoblins to me. By dint of climbing over the boxes and barrels in this place, and risking my neck over one or two perilous places, where nothing but a slender plank lay between me and the open shed below, I could look through a knothole in the wall of the barn, and see the heaps of hay, and the hens searching among them for grasshoppers, and sniff in the fresh smell of the stable, the grain bins, and the yard beyond. So vividly is all this stamped upon my mind that, to this day, when I hear the subdued cackling of a dozen matronly hens in a warm summer's afternoon, my thoughts go back to that early time, and I see a little girl with a blue gingham dress, and a white apron somewhat soiled in her researches, standing tip-toe against a crack, and endeavoring, with inquisitive nose and eyes, to find out all that is going on among the feathered occupants on the other side. "A pursuit of knowledge under difficulties" it might be called.

This darkest corner was where I hid all my choicest ghost stories from my aunt's observant eyes, and sat reading them, by the aid of a faint streak of light that came from the dilapidated roof above. It was a secure hiding place. From my dark seat I could see and hear them searching for me, if I was wanted to go on an errand, but was myself unobserved. And the delight I felt, when my aunt's dress actually brushed my own, one day, in the exploring tour, without my discovery, can scarcely be expressed.

In the outer room was a great hair trunk, containing among other curiosities an enormous wooden doll that had been the property of my aunt herself, in her childhood. I have seen a portrait of her, at the advanced age of three, with this monster in her arms. Then there were desks, and barrels of old papers, and chests of worn-out clothes, that I delighted to drag out from their musty hiding places. Did ever any one notice the peculiar smell that escapes from an old chest in which clothes have been kept for many years? It was like sweet incense to me in those days.

There were ropes hanging from the beams, suggesting pleasant thoughts of suicide by hanging. Of two of these I made a swing for a pet white kitten. Snugly ensconced in a wicker basket, stuffed with cotton, that served for her seat, the lazy little thing would let me push her back and forth, for an hour at a time, and blink her yellow eyes at me, as if she liked the sport! Dear Kitty! The swing has fallen down now, and she is dead, like every other thing I have ever loved!

The apple-barrels used to stand in this region. I never wondered, as the rest of the family did, about the mysterious disappearance of the fruit. If all I confiscated, and ate, at that time, should be heaped up there before my table, the mountain would cover me and my good pen from the sight of the Editor of the LEDGER forevermore. (N. B.—I wonder if he ever "cabbaged" apples in his school-boy days.) Last, but not least, I have a pleasant memory of a certain old saddle in the woodhouse chamber. I fixed it upon a barrel, (after reading Don Quixote and the Seven Champions of Christendom,) fastened a bridle upon a peg a little in advance, hunted up an old spur and stuck it in the heel of my gaiter, (spoiling the boot thereby,) placed the carving-knife in my little belt apron, and mounting into the saddle, and resting a rusty old "shooting-iron," (which had seen its best days in the Revolution,) on the tip of my toe, as the knights of old used to rest their lances, I rode gallantly on, (in imagination) against an unseen enemy, and, of course, demolished him! What happy, chivalrous days those were! How full of truth, and fire, and honor, was the child! Romantic and erratic, I will own, but at least, not heartless—not cowardly—not tyrannical or mean.

I always loved Don Quixote for riding full tilt against the windmills. I loved the poor old knight in any guise, and was glad to imitate him when I could. Ah, would that I had thrown defiance in the faces of countless social abuses, and countless moral evils, as rashly and courageously as I did then, in the face of my imaginary foe! After all—the days of our childhood are our best and noblest days!

◆

OUR FRIENDS.

BY MARY FORREST.

Friendship is one of the fine arts; but we degrade it to a mere handicraft. It was appointed unto a holy and chaste ministry: but only a few receive it as a sacrament. The chancel-rails are broken, and the place of divine ordinance is profaned. "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," and friendship has become, to the many, little else than a chattel and commodity.

Our affections are the sweet blossoming vines in the gardens of our hearts; and the sensitive tendrils with which they feel after and cling around the beautiful, are our fine instincts, which do not mislead, if the vine and the soil are healthful. But these instincts are constantly outraged, or ignored. Damon cannot wait for his Pythias, and strikes friendly alliance with Dobbs. Dorothy's bland smile and puerilities have a strange fascination for Diana, and forthwith Diana and Dorothy are coupled—eagle and jackdaw—floating down the current like Juno's swans.

But the eternal laws of adjustment, however set at naught, cannot be annulled. A spirit of antagonism is abroad in the land; and our social field has become, for the most part, a grand arena where these violated instincts do battle. We should learn the wisdom of Shakspeare:

"———— In companions
That do converse and waste the time together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
There must be needs a like proportion
Of lineaments, of manners and of spirit."

There are wayside shrines and goodly temples, where friendship sits arrayed in her own white garments, and stately pilgrims stay to do her reverence. These are scattered far and wide, like oasis on the sand-plains, but they realize our ideal—they involve fine meanings, and they are an earnest of the ripe affinities that await us.

Friendship is not a nut for the philosopher. Its delicate nature is not to be resolved into elements, and classified by the analyst. It is a dim, hovering beauty that we may not grasp;—a thing of joy, that glides in and out our hearts, dropping flowers and pearls. If we pursue it curiously, with gairish torches, we destroy the spell. The glory on the wings has faded. Our glancing fire-fly has become a black bug.

Yet the subtile interior philosophy of friendship has its outside indications which may be considered with safety and profit. These reveal a nice conformity as the basis of all noble alliance, and teach us that our friends are God-sends, to be had in reverence;—first fruits of the tree of immortal kinship, which we are to approach with clean hands and a prayer, and partake of abstemiously.

We see too much of our friends. Nothing human can abide the test of constant scrutiny, or is proof against some one of the forms of weariness and contempt which come with constant familiarity. We must put on the incorruptible, and do friendly *devoir* as sublimated essences, before we can indulge in uninterrupted fellowship without a surfeit. There is a kind of solitude in the blending of minds truly affined, that is very sweet and refreshing: but it is a long remove from that complete isolation, in which the soul of large resources experiences entire relief, and breathes, and expands, and feels, and thinks, with a joyful *abandon*.

"For mind hath its influence on mind; and no man is free
but when alone;
Yea, let a dog be watching thee, its eye will tend to thy
restraint."

Out of such a solitude the spirit comes with new vigor, like a strong man to win a race. The heart is keenly alive to all social amenities, and the soft-voiced greeting of a friend falls on the ear like music.

Friendship has its moods: and those moods must be respected. There is the same angel of tenderness sitting always in the inner-chamber of the heart, with its low breathing lute; but the door is sometimes closed, so that we neither see the fair vision, nor hear the sweet minstrelsy. The master-spirit may be a mystic, floating in an ideal world, forgetful of the delicate ministrations, if not the hospitalities of friendship, while you stand waiting in the vestibule. But he is your beautiful friend no less; nay, he is so much more to you. His wide realm of fancy, is it not part of your own domain? Be patient, and the rapt soul will come down to you a nobler possession.

The door of the enchanted room may be open, but a sorrow whose name you have never heard, and whose outlines are but dimly defined, may pace to and fro in the corridor, shutting away, at intervals, the light within. But the light burns on, and the hooded grief must pass unchallenged. We must learn to love our friends with a great faith. The moods of true friendship never degenerate into moodiness. Nobility is dignity; and only little minds indulge in peevishness and caprice.

A melancholy friend is a sorry fellow-pilgrim, with whose giants, Grim and Despair, you must wage each day a new battle. His sorrows are hydra-headed; and his imagination is a vast fen of spectral woes, where blue lights are dancing, and ill-omened hags mutter incantations. Eschew sombre companionships. Unless the life-current within you is strong enough to force the dull, sluggish stream with which it is united, above the rocks and pitfalls—on through its own green fields and pleasant vallies—unless it is broad and clear enough to reflect sun and stars for two, you will be borne away into the mist and darkness.

The temple of friendship is not a house of merchandise; and he who enters it with a spirit of traffic will find his desecrating purposes overturned, like the tables of the money-changers. The old adage—"There is no satisfaction in having a friend unless you can make use of him," had its origin in some heathenish, niggardly mind, and is as false and repulsive in sentiment as it is subversive of all harmony in relationship. Valentine's advice to the Duke of Milan—

"Win her with gifts, if she respect not words,
Dumb jewels often, in their silent kind,
More than quick words, do move a woman's mind"—

is no less a commentary upon the quality of Valentine's mind, and the character of his affiliations, than a gross libel upon womanhood. Friendship hath its place of incense and choice oblations; but if

"The eye is on the censer,
And not the hand that bears it"—

if you do not look beyond the delicate act to the spirit of love that should crown and sanctify it, your frank incense and myrrh will exhale only a sickening vapor;—your silver and your gold will tarnish; and your fair flowers will wither. Our friends should be our good angels, rich in resources, manifold in graces, regal in nature, and spontaneous in expression. The soothing ministry of such involves no bond, and admits of no obligation. Goodly loaves and fishes do not entice them, and "favors reciprocated" is a term unknown in their vocabulary.

It is a great thing to win a friend; it is a greater thing to wear the jewel with a grace befitting its pricelessness; it is greater still to hallow and embalm a friendship for the new life.

◆

THE OPIUM EATER.

BY G. WOODRUFF.

Ah, fatal drug, thy power once more, to taste
The bliss of one short hour beneath the beams
Of heaven's joyous sun and sky sublime,
Ere yet I die—oh, fount of joy divine.
With thee, sweet drug, within my trembling grasp
I breast the surging flow of Death's dark sea,
Like some poor sailor holds the tossing spar,
And rudely torn by clumsy rearing waves,
Breathes hard against the wind, but grasping sinks,
Wrenched from his dearest, fondest, latest friend.
And thus I hold thee, oh, my honied friend,
Familiar in my palm, and all within
Is mouldering ashes of the fire of life;
But thou'rt the beacon to retouch the blaze,
And waft me trembling to the upper realms
Of bliss empyrean, and the lucid air,
Of heaven's fair vale—a long and golden way.

Ah, now I taste thee! how my spirit burns—
What light is this that gushes at my heart?
Omniscience swells my vision, and elate
With impulse rampant, I am sped by hands
Unseen, unfelt, bodily to the woods!
Some chorus of the grove greets me with song,
Now low and sweet, now great as thunder—grand
As the murmur of the subsiding sea!
Some elf-king festival—some wanton rite—
Like raging Bacchantes upon my view
They burst: their ivory limbs all nimbleness
In sportive dances mix; like lambent flame,
Their heads and arms upheaving, grace the way,
And young-eyed nymphs bound joyous to the song.
I mount—I fly—through ether, space, away—
I spurn the ambient air with laughing scorn,
And float majestic through the crimson fields
Of heaven's highest vault!
But, ha! that pang,
That form! Oh God! I'm cold with terror! Death
Thrusts up his bony hand from mother earth,
To drag me into utter darkness—ha!
I die! I freeze! my soul—oh, terrible!

◆

AN OLD MAN'S VIEWS;

OR,

CONSOLATION FOR MARRIED PEOPLE.

Many of your correspondents, MR. LEDGER, seem to assume like most of the writers that have gone before them, as an uncontested principle, that *Marriage is generally unhappy*: but as I have an equal right to give my opinion of the objects about me, and a better title to determine concerning that state which I have tried than many who talk of it without experience; I am unwilling to be restrained by mere authority from advancing what, I believe, an accurate view of the world will confirm, *that marriage is not commonly unhappy, otherwise than as life is unhappy*; and that most of those who complain of connubial miseries, have as much satisfaction as their nature would have admitted, or their conduct procured, in any other condition.

It is, indeed, common to hear both sexes repine at their change, relate the happiness of their earlier years, blame the folly and rashness of their own choice, and warn those whom they see coming into the world against the same precipitance and infatuation. But it is to be remembered, that the days which they so much wish to call back, are the days not only of celibacy but of youth, the days of novelty and improvement, of ardor and of hope, of health and vigor of body, of gaiety and lightness of heart. It is not easy to surround life with any circumstances in which youth will not be delightful; and I am afraid that whether married or unmarried, we shall find the vesture of terrestrial existence more heavy and cumbrous, the longer it is worn.

That they censure themselves for the indifference of their choice is not a sufficient proof that they have chosen ill, since we see the same discontent at every other part of life which we cannot change. Converse with almost any man, grown old in a profession, and you will find him regretting that he did not enter into some different course, to which he too late finds his genius better adapted, or in which he discovers that wealth and honor are more easily attained. "The merchant," says Horace, "envies the soldier, and the soldier recounts the felicity of the merchant; the lawyer, when his clients harrass him, calls out for the quiet of the countryman; and the countryman, when business calls him to town, proclaims that there is no happiness but amidst opulence and crowds." Every man recounts the inconveniences of his own station, and thinks those of any other less, because he has not felt them. Thus the married praise the ease and freedom of a single state, and the single fly to marriage from the weariness of solitude. From all our observations we may collect with certainty, that misery is the lot of man, but cannot discover in what particular condition it will find most alleviations; or whether all external appendages are not, as we use them, the causes either of good or ill.

Whoever feels great pain, naturally hopes for ease from change of posture; he changes it, and finds himself tormented: and of the same kind are the expedients by which we endeavor to obviate or elude those uneasinesses to which mortality will always be subject. It is not likely that the married state is eminently miserable, since we see such numbers, whom the death of their partners has set free from it, entering it again.

Anatomists have often remarked, that though our diseases are sufficiently numerous and severe, yet when we inquire into the structure of the body, the tenderness of some parts, the minuteness of others, and the immense multiplicity of animal functions that must concur to the healthful and vigorous exercise of all our powers, there appears reason to wonder rather that we are preserved so long, than that we perish so soon, and that our frame subsists for a single day, or hour, without disorder, rather than that it should be broken or obstructed by violence of accidents, or length of time.

The same reflection arises in my mind, upon observation of the manner in which marriage is frequently contracted. When I see the avaricious and crafty taking companions to their tables, and their beds, without any inquiry, but after houses and money; or the giddy and thoughtless uniting themselves for life to those whom they have only seen by the light of tapers at a ball; when parents make matches for their children, without inquiring after their consent; when some marry for heirs to disappoint their hated relatives, and others throw themselves into the arms of those whom they do not love, because they have found themselves rejected where they were more solicitous to please; when some marry because their servants cheat them; some because they squander their own money, some because their houses are pestered with company, some because they will live like other people, and some only because they are sick of themselves; I am not so much inclined to wonder that marriage is sometimes unhappy, as that it appears so little loaded with calamity; and cannot but conclude that society has something in itself eminently agreeable to human nature, when I find its pleasures so great that even the ill choice of a companion can hardly overbalance them.

By the ancient custom of the Muscovites, the men and women never saw each other till they were joined beyond the power of parting. It may be suspected that by this method many unsuitable matches were produced, and many tempers associated that were not qualified to give pleasure to each other. Yet perhaps, among a people so little delicate, where the paucity of gratifications, and the uniformity of life, gave no opportunity for imagination to interpose its objections, there was not much danger of capricious dislike, and while they felt neither cold nor hunger, they might live quietly together, without any thought of the defects of one another.

Amongst us, whom knowledge has made nice, and affluence wanton, there are, indeed, more cautions requisite to secure tranquility; and yet if we observe the manner in which those converse who have singled out each other for marriage, we shall, perhaps, not think that the Russians lost much by their restraint. For the whole endeavor of both parties, during the time of courtship, is to hinder themselves from being known; and to disguise their natural temper, and real desires, in hypocritical imitation, studied compliance, and continued affectation. From the time that their love is avowed, neither sees the other but in a mask; and the cheat is managed often on both sides with so much art, and discovered afterwards with so much abruptness, that each has reason to suspect that some transformation has happened on the wedding night, and that by a strange imposture one has been courted, and the other married.

I desire you, therefore, MR. LEDGER, to question all who shall hereafter come to you with matrimonial complaints, concerning their behavior in the time of courtship, and inform them that they are neither to wonder nor repine, when a contract begun with fraud has ended in disappointment.

AN OLD MAN.

◆

NO CAUSE FOR JEALOUSY.—A beautiful lady having called out an ugly gentleman to dance with her, he was astonished at the condescension, and believing that she was in love with him, in a very pressing manner desired to know why she had selected him from the rest of the company. "Because, sir," replied the lady, "my husband commanded me to select such a partner as should not give him cause for jealousy."

◆

THE GRAVE!—It buries every error—covers every defect—extinguishes every resentment. From its peaceful bosom springs none but fond regrets and tender recollections. Who can look down upon the grave of an enemy, and not feel a compunctious throb, that he should have warred with the poor handful of earth that lies mouldering before him?

◆

"THE GREEN-EYED MONSTER."—Jealousy violates contracts—dissolves society—breaks wedlock—betrays friends and neighbors—nobody is good—and every one is either doing or designing them a mischief. Its rise is guilt or ill-nature, and by reflection it thinks its own faults to be other men's; as he that is overrun with the jaundice takes others to be yellow.

◆

A HOME THRUST.—An old toper, in the last stages of the dropsy, was told by his physician that nothing would save him but being "tapped." His son (a witty little shaver), objected to this operation, saying, "Daddy, daddy, don't submit to it, for you know there was never anything tapped in our house that lasted more than a week."

◆

A THANK ILL-PLACED.—"How do you do, sare?" said a Frenchman to an English acquaintance. "Rather poorly, thank you," answered the other. "Nay, my dear sare," said the Frenchman, "don't thank me for your illness—I cannot help it."

◆

THE VALUE OF A GOOD CHARACTER.—An honest man is believed without an oath, for his reputation swears for him.

"THE CLOUDS THAT SHUT ME OUT FROM HEAVEN."

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

Ye shadowy things that wander on
O'er the shoreless seas of space—
Ye voiceless things! can ye find no tone
To tell of the spirits' place?

I've seen ye oft when ye floated white
Through the mid-day sky's deep blue—
Dyed with sunset's golden, purple light,
I have gazed upon ye, too.

And in the chaos of autumn's storms,
When the wildest winds rushed by,
I've watched the robes of your weird forms
Trail black through the dreary sky.

And I've asked ye oft when the spirit's flight
Was seeking the unknown sphere,
If ye saw not mist-like forms of light,
And knew that we loved them here?

But now that I know such quest is vain,
Oh, ye silent clouds! no more
Will I breathe wild words of the shadowy train
That's gone to the shadowy shore.

Yet I'm weary, and there is a place of rest—
Earth is dark, and Heaven has light;
Then part, oh, clouds! that the loved and blest
May welcome my spirit to-night.

◆

AN IMPATIENT MOTHER

BY T. S. ARTHUR

Two children, a boy and a girl, were playing happily together, and had been playing in the most perfect harmony for over an hour. The pleasure of one seemed to be the pleasure of the other. If Amy suggested some new amusement, John agreed in cheerful good humor; and it was the same with Amy, if her brother proposed any change in their sports or employments.

"Let us play with paper dolls," said Amy, at last, growing weary over the toy houses which they had been building.

John was ready for paper dolls, or anything else his little companion might propose. So Amy brought from the closet her box of painted dresses, and the two children sat down upon the floor to arrange and fit them upon the figures of men and women that were also contained in the box.

"O, dear!" said Amy, affecting a tone of annoyance. "All my Flora's dresses are out of fashion. She must have one of the new Talmas before she can go walking again. Won't you paint me a new dress and cloak for her, if I cut them out?"

Nothing could have pleased John, at the time, better than this proposal. He went singing off upstairs for his paint box, while Amy tripped away, in the happiest mood possible, to her mother's room, and commenced turning over the things in her work basket.

"What do you want there?" the mother spoke, in quick, angry tones.

Amy started and drew back a step or two from the basket, her face flushing, and a cloud darkening the pure brow on which the sunshine rested only a moment before.

"I want the scissors," answered the child.

"Well, you can't have them. So, go away with you."

"I want to cut some new dresses for my Flora," urged the child, again approaching the basket, and diving her hand in among the labyrinth of spools, tape, muslin and cord which it contained. A sudden change had come over her feelings; and, in her childish persistance, she meant to obtain the article desired.

"Didn't I tell you that you couldn't have them?" exclaimed the mother, still further losing temper, and, at the same time, catching Amy by the arm, and jerking her, with considerable force, from the basket.

The child did not cry. She was not one of the kind that make a loud outcry every time their wishes are thwarted. Yet, she did not feel this unkindness of her mother any the less. It fell like a shadow upon her young spirit, and dimmed, for the time, all its brightness.

When Amy returned to the room in which, only a few moments before, she had parted with her brother, her mood of mind was entirely changed. He was already there, with his box of paints, and a sheet of white paper, from which to cut the new dresses for Flora.

"Did you get the scissors?" he asked.

"No," answered Amy, pouting her lips, and looking very unamiable.

"Why?"

"Mother wouldn't give them to me."

John looked disappointed. He stood, for a little while, looking now at the paint box and sheet of paper in his hands, and now at the altered face of his sister. The sister with whom he had been playing so sweetly for an hour.

"Never mind," he said, at length, in a comforting voice. "Flora will have to wait for her new cloak. She must wear one of her old dresses today. Here is a handsome one."

And stooping to the box on the floor, he lifted therefrom a green plaid walking dress. "Flora will look handsome enough in this," said he, in a cheerful voice.

"I don't want to play at paper dolls." Amy looked still more unlovely. The frown on her brow was heavier, and her lips pouted to a degree that sadly marred her childish features

John's face now became troubled. The current of his feelings, which had been gliding along so smoothly, with the sunshine on its breast, commenced rippling over stony obstructions. He sat down upon the floor, beside the box of paper dolls, and in a listless kind of way commenced turning over the figures and dresses. Presently he took up a bonnet, and began bending the front of it backwards, though not in a manner to injure or disfigure it.

"Don't do that!" said Amy, curtly. "You'll spoil the bonnet." And she came quickly forward, and reached out her hand to take the small piece of painted card-board from her brother. John, instead of giving it up in a kind way, was offended at his sister's manner, and thrust the bonnet behind him, out of her reach.

"Give it to me, John!" The child's reddening face marked her quickly rising anger.

But John did not yield. He still kept the bonnet beyond her grasp.

"I'll tell mother if you don't give me my doll's bonnet!" cried Amy, with increasing ill-nature.

"Tell her! I don't care!" replied the boy.

"Give me the bonnet!"

"I wont until I please."

"Mother!" Amy turned to the door, crying out in an imperative voice.

"What do you want?" The tone in which this query was uttered, showed the mother's state of feeling to be quite as much disturbed as that of her children.

"John wont give me my doll's bonnet!"

"John!" the mother called to him sharply.

"I'm not hurting the bonnet," answered John.

"Yes he is, mother. "He's bending it all up and spoiling it."

"It's no such thing, mother," responded John.

"John!" called the mother, sternly.

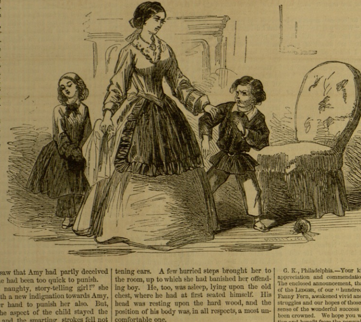
"Ma'am!"

"Give Amy her doll's bonnet this instant!"

"There! Take the bonnet, you mean, selfish thing!" And John threw the bonnet upon the floor.

"Mother! He wont give it to me!" called out the now thoroughly exasperated little girl, as she saw the bonnet tossed upon the floor.

At this the mother threw from her hands the work upon which she was engaged, and starting up in a passion, came with quick step and a resolute air into the room where her children were in dispute.



"Did'nt I tell you to give your sister her doll's bonnet!" she exclaimed, seizing the now frightened little boy by the arm, and holding him with a tight grip. "Say, didn't I tell you! What do you mean by such conduct!"

And, without waiting for an explanation she struck him one or two blows.

"I did give it to her," said John, as soon as he could find his voice. "There it is lying at her feet now."

"You didn't give it to me. You only threw it *at* me," was indignantly answered by Amy.

The mother saw that Amy had partly deceived her, and that she had been too quick to punish.

"You are a naughty, story-telling girl!" she said, turning with a new indignation towards Amy, and raising her hand to punish her also. But, something in the aspect of the child stayed the up-lifted hand, and the smarting strokes fell not upon the frightened culprit.

"Naughty children!" she said, as she regained a little self-possession. "Naughty children!—to be always quarrelling with one another! I'm surprised and ashamed of you! What will your father think when he hears of this? How will he feel when he learns that his little boy and girl have been angry with one another? It makes me sick and sad to think that my children should act so wickedly!"

Very little of a right impression did the mother's censure make upon the minds of her unhappy children, the sunshine of whose pleasant day her own darkening anger had clouded. They stood with partly averted faces; silent; moody; and with unkindness in their hearts. Their apparent want of penitence, fretted their weak mother's mind. She looked for, at least required, an obedient yielding on their part. She expected them to "kiss and be friends again," at her word, as if love and kindness were vassals that came and went at another's bidding. But, she could not command the sun of love to shine, nor scatter, with a breath of her lip, the shadows that were around their young spirits.

"I must separate you!" she at length said, with a sternness of voice and manner that showed more of angry indignation than love. "Amy, do you go over into my room, and stay there alone, until I call you; and you, John, go off to the garret, and don't let me see your face until your father comes home. I shall tell him of all this!"

As if any place would be more agreeable than that in which their mother's presence smote them, the two children, at this command, went quickly away; Amy into her mother's room, and John up into the lonely garret. Both, the instant they were entirely alone abandoned themselves to tears—Amy sobbing to herself as if her burdened little heart would break, and John standing still in the centre of the garret floor, with scalding drops falling rapidly over his burning cheeks. To the boy, there was a cruel mystery in the sudden change towards him which his sister had manifested. He understood that his mother had refused to let her have a pair of scissors to cut out dresses for her paper dolls, and he could understand how this would fret her mind; but he was too young and unskilled in the philosophy of mental transitions to comprehend how the disappointment should have wrought in her so great a change of feeling toward himself, and caused her to act with selfish unkindness.

If John's mother had not punished him, he could have forgiven Amy. But the blows, though felt only for a moment by his shrinking body, still smarted on his spirit as painfully as when they were given in sudden anger. In a little while, the boy's tears ceased to flow. Sitting down, on an old chest, and in the shadow of an unhappy mood, he brooded in loneliness and sorrow over the early mystery of life, and learned one of his first lessons of hate towards those by whom he felt that he had been wronged. An evil seed had been sown in the earth of his young heart, and, already, its latent principle of life was moving with a vital force.

"I'll lock up all my picture books," he said to himself, spitefully. "Amy sha'n't look into one of them again as long as she lives. I wont play with her any more, nor paint another doll's dress for her. I'll throw her kitten out the window, and let her canary out of the cage—and I'll burn every one of her playthings that I can put my hands on!"

Now, though John never executed any of these direful threats against his little sister, he was really in earnest when he made them, so full of bad feelings was his heart. And though, on the very next day, he passed hours with her in sport, he did not feel right toward her, and was not so willing to yield his wishes for her pleasure as he had been in times past.

As for Amy, poor child! She was wretched enough, alone in her mother's room, when, but for that mother's angry refusal to let her have a pair of scissors, she might still have been playing happily with her brother, who had been separated from her, and sent away up into the garret, where she was afraid to stay all by herself for even a single moment.

An hour after the mother had punished her children, she laid aside her work, and went over into her chamber to see what Amy was doing.

"Into some mischief, I'll warrant!" she said to herself, as she thought how very quiet the child had been. But she found her asleep on the floor, with the tears yet undried upon her cheeks. A sudden tenderness came over her feelings, and lifting the beautiful sleeper in her arms, she laid her upon the bed, and smoothing back the moist hair from her forehead, stood and looked for some moments into her still sad face. She sighed heavily as the mother's love came rushing back into her heart, and bending down to the little one, she kissed her fervently.

Then a thought of John caused her to turn from the bed-side and go out into the passage, and up to the third story of the house. Standing at the foot of the garret stairs, she called him in a suppressed voice. No answer came. She waited for a few moments, and then called once more. But only the echo of her voice came down to her listening ears. A few hurried steps brought her to the room, up to which she had banished her offending boy. He, too, was asleep, lying upon the old chest, where he had at first seated himself. His head was resting upon the hard wood, and the position of his body was, in all respects, a most uncomfortable one.

"John!" She laid her hand upon him.

The boy started up with a terrified air. He had been dreaming of his sister—they had quarreled in the dream, and he had struck her a heavy blow on the head with a piece of iron, and seen her fall bleeding upon the floor. At this moment the voice of his mother had awakened him.

"Oh, mother! I didn't mean to do it!" he cried out, looking fearfully around him.

"Do what, my child?" was asked in a soothing voice.

For a moment or two, John continued to glance around him in a bewildered manner, and then said, as he leaned his face upon his mother, and burst into tears—

"It was only a dream."

Tenderly his mother drew her arm around him, as she said, in tones of gentle admonition—

"Naughty feelings bring naughty dreams."

Ah, if she could have known that for this "naughty dream," she was responsible, and not the child, it might have been better for that child, and for all of her children in the great future of their lives.

Mothers, be patient with your children. Wrong them not by sudden anger. Mar not the beauty of their young spirit. If they are wont to be angry with one another; to quarrel in their plays; to have the sunshine of good humor suddenly fade: look close to yourselves, and see if the cause thereof does not lie mainly at your own doors. Of one thing you may be very sure. Impatient mothers will have impatient, wrangling, unhappy children.

The law of cause and effect is as immutable in this as in all other cases. And so we beg of you, for the sake of your precious children, to receive this lesson into your hearts.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

XIMENE says a female friend of hers became enamoured of a miserable drunken man, and after two years of opposition on the part of her friends, married him. For a year, he was drunk every day, and most disgusting in his habits, and his wife left him, taking with her their infant child. After a separation of eighteen months, she went to live with him again, although his conduct had not in the least amended. Another year of poverty and wretchedness followed; the wife supporting the family, and the husband lying drunk all of the time; and then came a second separation. Six months after this, the wife's love for the miserable man constrained her again to return to him, and endure poverty and suffering for another year, when she again left him, never to return, although her love for him continued strong for some six years thereafter. Ximene cannot account for a woman's falling in love with such a man in the first place, nor for her continuing to love him so long after marriage, and wants us to explain the matter for her. We cannot throw any light upon the subject, any more than we could upon a woman's loving and living with a swine. We should say she must either be insane or of a very grovelling nature.

WAVERLY says that several months ago he asked a young lady if he might have "one of the many curls that adorned her snowy brow," to which she responded "yes." A short time thereafter he secretly severed one of said locks, and carefully folding it in a piece of tissue paper, placed it as near his heart as his physiological organization would permit. When the young lady found out what he had done, she became enraged, and by her friends' advice has sought recompense in a suit at law. Waverly wishes to know what the damages will probably be; but, as we have no precedent by which to judge of such a case, we can give him no positive information on the subject. We should think, however, that they would be in the neighborhood of six cents.

R. C.—You ask us to inform you "whether Moses did write the 15th verse of the 16th chapter of Genesis." We answer your question by another. Why should he not have written that verse as well as the 14th and 16th, which you do not cavil at? We are content to take the Scriptures as we have had them handed down to us, being well assured that we cannot improve upon the doctrine inculcated by them, and that we should only desecrate them by suffering frivolous questions and affected objections to be discussed in our pages.

WALTER SINNOTT.—It is impossible you can be serious in requesting us to procure and forward you materials for a depilatory. Why not address yourself to a chemist? Once for all, we must decline entering into any private correspondence with our readers. Reasonable questions shall always have attention and will be answered through the LEDGER in due course, but NOT by letter; it is therefore useless to send stamped envelopes for answers through the Post-office.

OLD SUBSCRIBER, Philadelphia.—The conduct of the person you mention, in sending the young lady, (who he knows is engaged to you,) invitations to accompany him to places of amusement, and in calling upon her against her expressed wishes, is very reprehensible. She should refuse to speak to, or in any way recognize him, and then if he continues to annoy her, have him arrested.

EDITH, (C. W.)—We cannot undertake to teach young ladies how to make love; it is so long since we have had any opportunity of witnessing such incantations, that we doubt if they are now any part of feminine education. Good sense and maidenly delicacy will be your best and safest instructors.

BALTIMORE.—If your wife cares nothing for you, and will not let you stay in the same house with her, you had better make up your mind not to live with her any longer. By applying to the proper court, you can get your children. Any good lawyer will manage the case for you.

RHINALDO has "kept company" with a young girl, until she loves him and he loves her exceedingly; and they might be very happy, were it not for one stubborn fact, namely: Rhinaldo is a married man. This fact he has kept from the knowledge of the girl, and now he finds himself in a fearful position. He is afraid of being exposed to his wife and the public, and of losing not only the love, but the good opinion of the young lady; and he wants to know how he can "*honorably*" manage the case, so as not to forfeit her affection. It strikes us that Rhinaldo is a greater villain than the bandit whose name he has signed to his disgraceful confession. The only "honorable" thing he can do is, to confess his duplicity to his wife and the young lady, whom he has so basely deceived, and beg their forgiveness, taking his chances for pardon or execration.

A YOUNG INQUIRER.—The difference between civilization and barbarism is that between an educated man and a savage. A civilized man is one whose mind has been enlightened by education, and modelled by the refinements of intellectual society. He is a being who *thinks* and acts rationally—the barbarian is a creature who acts from impulse only. We might write a chapter upon the subject, but this would be the substance of it.

A. B. C. D.—If you can prove what you say, you can probably get a divorce from your wife. At any rate, you had better make no opposition to her leaving you, if she loves some one else better than you and does not scruple to say so.

H. A., Louisville.—Strawberries means *strewberries*, or berries that *strew*, *strow*, *straw*, or *spread* themselves about; *straw* being an old spelling of the verb *to strow*.

G. K., Philadelphia.—Your kind and enthusiastic letter of appreciation and commendation was very grateful to us. The enclosed announcement, that you cut from an old copy of the LEDGER, of our "hundred-dollar-a-column story," by Fanny Fern, awakened vivid and pleasing recollections of our struggles and our hopes of those days, and gave us a realizing sense of the wonderful success with which our efforts have been crowned. We hope you will derive as much gratification and benefit from the perusal of the LEDGER for the *ensuing* six years, as you say it has yielded you during the six last past.

Z. Z.—Meet your drowsy husband with his own weapons. Instead of troubling yourself to amuse him during the evenings, affect to follow his example; depend upon it, Benedict will soon be wide awake, if he finds you nodding over the tea-table, and sleepily indifferent to his comforts. As to his wakefulness at night, we know not how to advise a remedy unless, indeed, you take to lecturing him upon his bad taste and your own unquestionable merits, unparalleled patience and so forth. If that does not drive him to sleep, your case is hopeless.

VIOLET SMITH.—We can hardly persuade ourselves to humor your whim of trying to spoil, in all probability, a very charming complexion, by the use of cosmetics. Why should you object to the rosy hue of health? Probably you are romantic, and desire to look interesting, and therefore you would be pale. If so, you are wrong, and "mamma" acts very judiciously in withholding any great allowance of pocket money, while there is a chance of your misapplying it in the purchase of nostrums that will inevitably spoil your beauty, if they do not endanger your health.

RURIC NEVEL says he called, upon invitation, to spend an evening with a young lady. The evening was a pleasant one, the window was raised, an acquaintance passing bowed to the young lady, who accosted and entered into a conversation with him. At this, our friend Ruric became first uneasy, then vexed, then jealous, then indignant, and then he left. The question is, "What shall he do?" He had better stay away from female society hereafter, inasmuch as ladies are not apt to permit men to control their courtesies and social intercourse.

DONNA ISABEL.—A gentleman who once professed great kindness and affection for this lady, but has lately married, still continues to visit her on friendly terms unknown to his wife, to whom he refuses to introduce her. Ought she to decline receiving his visits? We think she ought. There is something suspicious and insulting in his refusal, and, moreover, Donna Isabel has a duty which she owes to herself. Such friendships are dangerous, however pure in reality, because the world suspects them, and treats them accordingly.

JASPER.—Profane swearing is always out of place, vulgar, and wicked. A decent infidel even, who had proper self-respect, would be ashamed to indulge in such a low vice. The use of slang is also a mark of low-breeding and vulgarity. It is especially odious in women. We should have little faith in a woman who habitually used slang. You are right in taking so much pains to teach your children to avoid the use of both profane language and slang. They are deadly enemies to refinement and moral purity.

GUY MANNERING.—When a gentleman meets a lady at the house of a mutual friend, he should not only recognize but return her salutation in a courteous manner; no matter what private piques and quarrels they may have, he would have no right to display his enmity before their host. A man should always be *polite*, but he need not be *cordial* except at his own will and pleasure.

CALEDONIA.—The reason husbands and wives are not as happy, and as agreeable to each other as when they were lovers, is because they do not take the trouble to curb their selfishness *after* marriage as they did *before*. That is the whole secret—or, at any rate, it is a key to she secret. I. you have talent for painting and writing you had better pursue both.

CHARLES.—Your best course would be to tell a person, to whom you apply for employment, your history at once, and then if he employs you, and any one informs him of your misfortunes, he will not be shocked and prejudiced against you. Nothing is ever gained in such a case by concealment, however worthy the motives which prompt it.

HIBERNIAN.—What do you mean by "*respectable society?*" It does not require much *learning* for a man to be *respectable*. In fact, some of the most uneducated people that ever lived, have been among the most respectable, and some of the most learned have been the least respectable. *Moral worth* is what gives respectability.

ORION.—We cannot tell you how to assist a lady who has fallen upon the floor to her feet, with grace. If you have not the tact and self-possession to perform such a courtesy in a becoming manner, no rules will serve you. In riding with a lady, a gentleman should not race with another, unless his companion be willing.

J. L.—Agriculture has become so much of a science by the numerous improvements that have been introduced within the last century, that a knowledge of chemistry is to a certain extent very desirable; and you will, we doubt not, derive both pleasure and profit from the study of it, previous to your undertaking the management of a farm.

EUCLID.—A body falls, in a given time, sixteen times as many feet as the square of the number of seconds in that time. For example, suppose a stone to fall for a space of five seconds. The square of five is twenty-five, and sixteen times twenty-five is four hundred—the number of feet the stone would fall in five seconds.

J. P.—You have descanted upon the exception, and not upon the rule. We have known many "old maids," as they are derisively termed, who have long constituted the happiness of their domestic circle, and are ornaments of their sex.

OLD ALBANIAN.—From your statement of your case we do not feel willing to give you any advice, as we do not think you have stated all the circumstances with sufficient clearness. You should advise with some lawyer in whom you have confidence—if you can find such an one.

WILLIAM ORTON, (Chicago).—If you apply to any vendor of the LEDGER in your town, and give him a list of the numbers wanted, he can have them in his usual parcel by sending for them.

R. S.—The visiting of a foreign country by a minor does not denationalise him; and if he arrives at his majority while abroad, he can vote on returning to his place of residence at home.

SANCHO PANZA.—Every one should join with that church which he prefers, and exercise his own taste and judgment in regard to attending places of amusement.

M. V. CLINTON.—We cannot turn the LEDGER into a United States directory.

TYRO.—The New York Free Academy furnishes its students opportunities to acquire an excellent education.

M. W.—Try the following simple remedy, suggested by Mr. Cull, in his "Observations on Impediments of Speech." He observes that "in impediments of the voice it is evident the defect must be in the larynx, and when it is discovered to be a loss of power over its continuance, it will be found to arise from a spasmodic closing of the glottis; and such persons, however difficult and imperfect may be their articulation of words of conversation or general reading, are mostly able to sing, and some even to read poetry, without betraying any defect. The reason is this,—that in singing, the stream of voice never stops; and in reading poetry it should seldom be interrupted. Now, for the stream of voice to flow, it is essential that the glottis should remain open. To effect this, and so apply a remedy for the inconvenience, it is simply necessary to produce a voice by *droning* on any simple sound, as the letter *e* in *berry*, or more properly, the *ir* in *bird*, by which means the glottis is kept open, and the stream of voice uninterruptedly flowing through it, is thereby ready to be modified by the enunciative organs to form any words that may be desired. The only peculiarity will be a joining of all the words by the drone sound, which, as long as it is continued, will prevent the closure of the glottis, and consequently the recurrence of the impediment." The remedy indicated appears so simple, that our correspondent and others similarly affected, will do well to test it by immediate practice.

THESPIAN is very much pained by what he calls our "implacable hostility to the drama," and our "repeated assaults upon it in our Answers to Correspondents," and begs that we will hereafter exercise more charity towards actors, theatres, and the mimic world generally, and not so uniformly advise inquirers "*not* to go upon the stage under any circumstances whatever." We cannot comply with any of Thespian's requests, because, in the first place, he mis-states our position by implication; in the second place, shows that he has not understood the spirit of our remarks; and in the third place, does not seem to know what he means, or what he wants himself. We cherish no uncharitableness towards the members of any profession, although we do condemn divers professions themselves, and *pity* the followers thereof. There are, doubtless, members of the theatrical profession who mean to do right, and aim at morality, but the social atmosphere, and the circumstances by which they are necessarily surrounded, constantly deteriorate their natures, and sooner or later the evil results are manifested. We have never intended to injure or wound the feelings of any human being by our remarks; but, in discussing public questions, of whatever nature, we must utter our honest convictions; and, as a celebrated divine used to say, "hew to the line, let the chips fly in whose face they will."

DON QUIXOTE.—A lady who is engaged to be married should be exceedingly careful how she corresponds with male acquaintances, and the same rule will apply to "engaged" gentlemen's correspondence with promiscuous young ladies. Letters on matters of importance, business letters and the interchange of such courtesies, recognitions and responses as circumstances demand, should, of course, be attended to. The kernal of the matter is just this: a person who is engaged to be married should do nothing which would annoy or give pain to the other party; and the very fact that the propriety of an act has to be debated with one's conscience is sufficient proof that it should not be performed.

MILWAUKEE writes, in a beautiful lady's hand, that a clergyman of her acquaintance "has taken to wearing his hair very long—which is considered indicative of mental weakness." Said clergyman's friends feel greatly scandalized and deeply pained at this Samsonian growth of hair on their beloved pastor's head, and want to know how a stop can be put to it, and he be restored to his former standing in the community. We really cannot give our correspondent any consolation in this matter. A man has a right, even if he be a clergyman, to regulate his own personal affairs in his own way, without the impertinent interference of well-meaning but weak-minded friends.

MATTHEW L.—You are under medical treatment, and yet ask for a prescription from persons who, for aught you know, are as perfectly ignorant of the science of medicine as they are of you or your disease. Such a course is unjust to your doctor and dangerous to yourself. No professional man would entertain your case for a moment if he suspected you were quacking yourself at the very time you professed to take his advice. We decline upon principle to assist in any such duplicity.

F. B. is thanked for his communication. The much disputed couplets, ascribed to the author of Hudibras, will be found in the third part of the third canto, line 243—

"For those that fly may fight again,
Which he can never do that's slain."

Line 347—

"He that *complies* against his will,
Is of his own opinion still.

A. Z.—Such domestic difficulties can only be settled by those who are concerned in them. You, and your parents, and your lover should adjust the matter amicably if possible. If you cannot do that, you must make your choice and take your chance. That is all there is about it. In any event, you, like all other mortals, will find that "perfect happiness" is not to be found in this world.

W. H. S., Baltimore.—The party who remitted the money is responsible for its loss—or, rather, for the original demand. Your bank is not responsible, as you were simply acting as an agent for the owner of the draft. The issue lies between him and the bank that claims to have remitted the money by mail, and he must proceed against that institution, of which he can, no doubt, recover the $1100.

A YOUNG LADY, Rochester.—You are right in objecting to marry your betrothed, now that you have discovered he is in the habit of drinking spirituous liquors. We like your good sense, your firmness, and your conscientiousness, and we hope you will inflexibly adhere to the resolution you have formed. We wish that all young ladies were as sagacious and resolute as you seem to be.

E. A. T.—The law certainly is ungallant enough to connive, at least, if it does not openly warrant, a husband in the act of opening his wife's letters, if he so pleases; and we think a wife not only infringes her duty, but acts very unwisely also, in refusing him to do so; and that a husband who would meddle with his wife's letters must, on the other hand, be a sneak.

TRUTH.—If your means do not allow you to support your sister, aged 26, there is no law to compel you to do so; in such cases the law of nature is supposed to be sufficiently powerful to secure the right course. This country has provided asylums for such as your unfortunate relation is described to be, and it does not require you to do impossibilities.

PELEG.—It is not probable that the bite of a healthy dog could give a man the hydrophobia; although the mortal dread and agony which the *fear* of that horrid disease sometimes occasions might bring on fits and convulsions that a superficial observer would mistake for hydrophobia.

A SUBSCRIBER, Angelica.—When a young lady quits a room filled with company, at her father's house, and does not return, it is not her duty to send an excuse to any young man present, how great soever he may be in his own estimation, or whatever claims he may fancy he has upon her regard.

LULU.—Read the works of Milton, Pope, Addison, Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Moore, and Dickens; also the history of England and of the United States, with as much biography and other history as you please, and the LEDGER regularly.

DETROIT GIRL.—You did right to pay no attention to the note of the man who insulted you by calling at your house while he was drunk. He should have sent an ample apology before attempting any other communication.

WOONSOCKET says that he has just read that there is no such whirlpool on the coast of Norway as the Maelstroom, and wants to know what *we* think about it. *We* have always regarded the Maelstroom as a great "*suck in.*"

EOLINE.—The best way for a young lady to win a man's love is not to try at all, any further than the observance of the most agreeable and lady-like deportment may be considered "trying."

MINNEHAHA.—Poetry does not affect all people alike. Your friend may be quite right in maintaining that Tennyson's "May Queen" always makes her cry, although *you* can see nothing affecting in it.

BEE RAISER.—You have no right to go on your neighbor's ground, without his permission, to recover your bees, which have alighted and taken up their abode thereon. You must arrange the matter with him as best you can.

M. H. C.—Do not be in haste. You had better wait five years, than incur the lasting displeasure of the "old folks," by a precipitate defiance of their wishes and their authority. Forbearance and conciliation are *always* best in such matters.

J. G.—You have no reason to be afraid of *girls*. They are perfectly harmless. Make a confidante of any one of your acquaintance, and she will soon help you to a wife.

S. R. D.—You must bear the affliction with all the bravery you can command, and go on inflexibly doing your duty You will then come out triumphant in the end.

J. B. C.—By referring to the "Answers," in the LEDGER of March 14th, you will find ample information in regard to the Naval School at Annapolis.

P. J. G.—We can furnish you with the numbers of the LEDGER from June 7th, 1856, to August 2d of the same year. They will cost 36 cents.

J. H. S.—Charles II., and James II., of England, were not of the same race as William of Orange, and were only related to him by marriage.

DAMON.—The line—

"She walked the waters like a thing of life,"

occurs in Byron's "Corsair."

C. H. B.—Kosciusko was a Pole; Baron Steuben was a German.

T. L. A.—Electrotyping is simply a new process of stereotyping.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*